

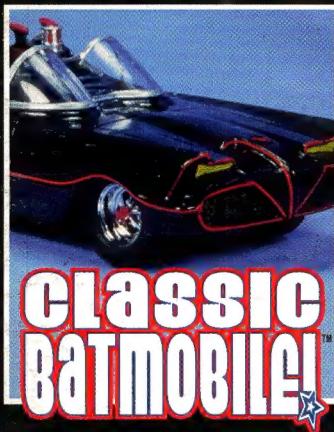
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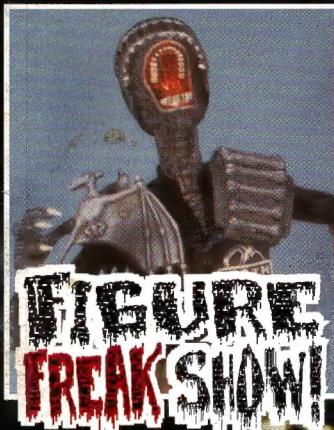
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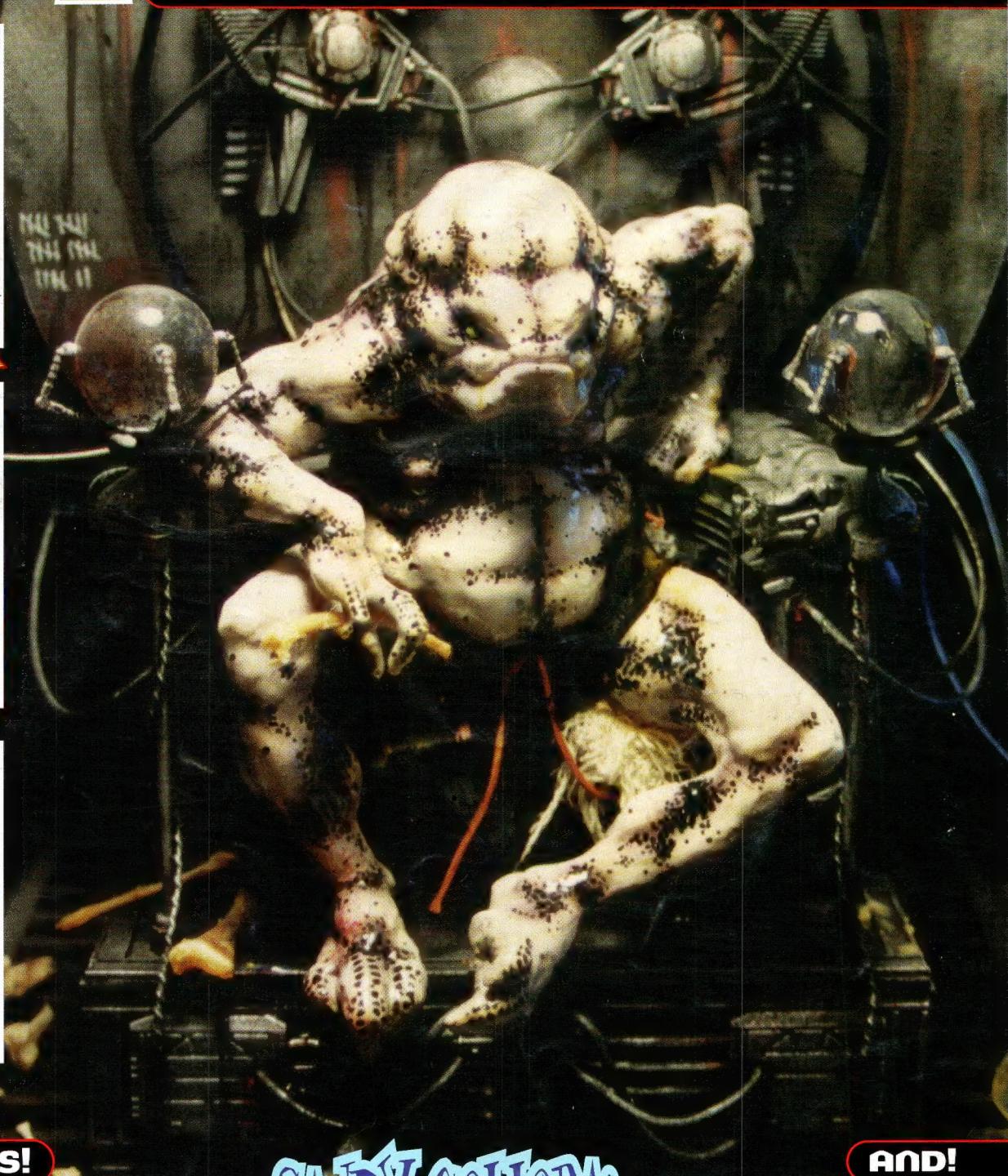
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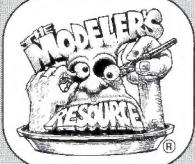
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Our Three-Fold Mission Statement

Our Magazine: Striving to provide you, the hobbyist, with a promptly published, bimonthly magazine that presents the most up-to-date and useful information for your modeling needs.

Our Customer Service: Continuing to offer prompt, personalized attention to our readers, retailers and advertisers.

Our Products: Providing high quality and affordably priced items.

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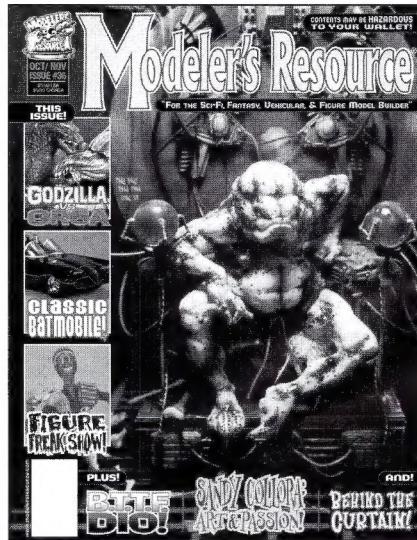
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Bargain Hunter's Guide

THIS ISSUE'S COVER

SANDY COLLORA'S CREATIONS!

Sandy Collora has created some phenomenal sculptures in his career. Our cover showcases one of those. Tune in this issue for an interview with Sandy beginning on page 40.



Kits pictured built/painted by Bill Craft (Godzilla vs Orga), Hilber Graf (Batmobile), Atle Eriksen (Judge Death), Main photo: *Slug Lord* (Sandy Collora creation, photo by Dennis Williams), © 2000 Modeler's Resource. All rights reserved.

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Not too many years ago, a book was making the rounds titled, *What Color is Your Parachute?*

The book was designed to help folks determine what career they were best suited for by aiding them in examining their abilities, likes and dislikes. I read it and while it was helpful to a degree, in looking back, it seems that what is often the best factor in determining a chosen profession is something that we all take for granted: the passage of time.

Over the past 20 years or more, I have gradually discovered my strengths and weaknesses as well as what I like to do the best and what I can't stand doing.

Isn't it funny how you think you know yourself thoroughly when you're fresh out of college only to determine later on in life that you hardly knew yourself at all? You look back and say, "Who was that kid?" Age often ushers in maturity (hopefully!) and with it, a greater understanding of who we are and what we're all about.

Over the many years I've been involved in this hobby, I have found that there are certain models that I really enjoy building, certain models that I wouldn't waste my time on and certain models that, while I won't build, I can fully appreciate what others have done in that area. I can generally appreciate just about any model out there (except those that I personally consider excessively violent or pornographic), even if I know that I won't build or paint a particular genre.

I've also found out that I have a "time limit" that I will dedicate to any given model. After that, a bit of boredom tends to creep in and I start to feel the need to move onto something else. It's like an internal alarm that goes off. If I choose to ignore it, I wind up facing a good deal of frustration. I'm no longer

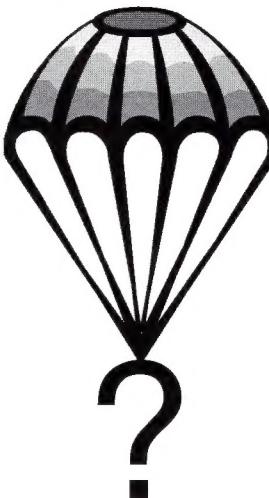
as focused and nothing feels creative. I've learned to listen to my inner signals and either get away from that project for a bit or move onto something else.

Although we try to keep *Modeler's Resource®* as diversified as possible, I have three favorite areas of modeling: Figures, Science Fiction and Fantasy. Those last two areas can involve vehicular kits as long as they're not simply your basic car or truck model. The vehicle has to be related to some character out of a movie or comic book (very much like Hilber Graf's conversion of the Futura into the Batmobile™ in this issue). I've also been able to realize that while I enjoy spending the time it takes to create a really nice looking and effective diorama, I often do not enjoy spending the same amount of time painting a figure or a vehicle if a great deal of detail is involved. Beyond this, sometimes I have to be revved up in order to fully enjoy building and painting a model. Funny thing about painting figures...after a while, they can tend to become routine. You know what I mean...apply the flesh tones, paint the clothing, detail the face, etc. However,

when you create a diorama it's always different, even if you've already done that particular character on three separate occasions.

If you were to narrow down your favorite area of modeling, what would it be? In other words... "What color is your modeling parachute?" What type of modeler are you? Are you the type that builds only one kind of model or do you embrace many of the various genres before you can fully enjoy the hobby? For you, is modeling "all in the details"? Are you the kind of modeler who cannot stand the fact that all other modelers do not model what you model? Are you "dead serious" about modeling? It's way past a hobby. It has become life itself (kind of like disco), or is modeling only one part of your life?

Probably though, the most



(In)Correctomundo!

• We listed the wrong zip code for Wondermass Idealab in Issue #34. Please note that their correct zip code is 35742 when contacting them via snail mail.



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Models On Display

Got a kit that includes at least two figures in a diorama? If so, give some thought to allowing us to showcase your kit in our "Models On Display" section. Send in the pics!

Kids' Korner Kit Showcase!

If you're 14 and under and you'd like to show off your kits, send in the pictures. We'll be adding this section to our Kid's Korner section very soon.

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Kits Sent for Review

Sample kits for review are welcome and appreciated. We would prefer to utilize each kit received to its fullest potential. With this in mind, whenever possible, it is our desire to use sample kits as centerpieces in detailed "how-to" articles, as opposed to doing a simple review. Please allow us up to 3 to 6 issue lead time before seeing your kit in an article. Please submit sample kits to: *Modeler's Resource, Review Samples, 4120 Douglas Blvd, #306-372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5936*.

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e-mail:
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"I Won't Subscribe"

Greetings Fred!

I first saw your magazine with Issue 23 quite by accident. The bookstore I saw it in had no idea where it came from or how much to charge for it. They have never had it again either.

Today I found Issue 34 in the hobby shop and picked up my second issue, I really enjoy it. I have, however, decided not to become a subscriber, but will pick every issue up at the hobby shop. This gives me an excuse to "visit" and find out what is new on several different fronts!

I have a question for you, on page 11 in a letter from Kevin Cornell, reference is made to a figure called "generic man". Wow, sounds like what I am looking for! What scale? How Much? Where do I get several?

I have been putting off doing a project for years looking for something like "generic man" and hope you can help me. Thanks a lot,

Best Regards, Don MacIntyre
(e-mail)

- Thanks for your perseverance regarding the magazine. We're all for supporting your local hobby shop and would encourage you to purchase the magazine through that venue.

Generic Man is a creation of Joe Sid's and he can be reached through a number of sources including the 'Net at: <http://members.tripod.com/~neomodeltech/> or Tel/Fax: 818.347.4818

"Hobby Shops Are Essential"

Hi Fred,

By way of introduction, my name is Robert Fletcher (but I go by "Fletch") and I've been building models since 1958.

My car models have appeared in many magazines from Street Rodder to Rod & Custom and Scale Auto Enthusiast to Plastic Fanatic, but my "monsters" just don't seem to fit anywhere! They technically fit into fantasy, vehicular and figure modeling so I thought I'd send off a few pictures to see what you think. You may return them in the enclosed SASE.

Now to another subject - it has been pretty fantastic to live through the "golden age" of models! I still have my "Aurora Master Model Maker" certificate I got from a model contest I entered back in '64 or '65. I even have some pictures of models I got at Christmas and my original Frankenstein - all considered "classics" today. What is even more fantastic is just about every great model from back then is being re-introduced today! How cool!

Just as a note to "Letters" in (Issue) #33 - I have over 400 unbuilt models and that is after selling off at least half or more of my collection. If I don't intend to build it - then it will be used for parts. You can't have too many parts if you kit bash like me!

I was turned on to your mag by a friend of a friend who sent me copies of the "Glue Queen" articles. She is a great writer. I am enclosing a check for a subscription on the basis of her articles alone! Keep Cindy Morgan forever!

Hobby Shops are essential! It is so good to be able to see what you are buying and to be able to make spur-of-the-moment purchases. I try to get down

to Sacramento at least twice a year to check out everything. They may cost more than the Internet but who doesn't love going up and down the aisles like a kid in a candy store?

That is enough for now. Keep up the "plastic" articles as to me that is the only kind of modeling!

If you are coming to Tahoe, please stop by and talk models.

Thanks, Fletch

- Thanks much, Fletch! The pictures you sent are fantastic and, if you don't mind, I'd like to keep them on hand for showcasing in one of our upcoming "Models on Parade" columns. One thing I appreciate about them is that they don't fit into any strict category, just like my own brand of modeling. While I build all kinds of kits, I don't necessarily consider myself to be solely a figure kit or Sci-Fi or fantasy modeler. I am all of those and hope this magazine reflects that image.

I'll pass along your kind words to Cindy Morgan; I know she'll greatly appreciate them. She (along with her Glue King, Mike), keeps us connected with wonderfully imaginative articles. Because of her craft background, she makes a very smooth transition into the modeling arena and teaches us all a thing or two about blending these two viable areas.

I, too, enjoy roaming the aisles of a well-stocked hobby shop. Because I'm not just looking for one type of model or one particular product, it's fun to just check things out to find out what new goodies are available. You can't do that over the Internet (or through other mail order venues) and while the Internet or mail order is the only "hobby shop" many folks might have access to, because of their particular location in the world, my first preference is the locally owned shop and I'll continue to patronize those places first.

Thanks again for writing, Fletch and I just may take you up on your invitation the next time we're in Tahoe.

"Just Another Model Magazine"

Dear Editor,

It would seem that I'm one of the minority, but I do miss the "babes" that used to be in your magazine. As soon as I read about the magazine being bought by Kalmbach I knew it was doomed. They were what attracted me to your magazine in the first place. Now you're just another model magazine.

What I find interesting is that while many seem to be bothered about seeing some female flesh, no one seems to be bothered about the gore and violence that is also part the magazine's genre. A bare breast will ruin a kid's life forever, but a bloody head slammed halfway into the edge of a table is fine.

It was an enjoyable and unique magazine when I first subscribed, but now has just joined the bland PC ranks with the rest of them.

James Kajpust (e-mail)

- Thank you for taking the time to write and express your thoughts. At this point I'd like to correct one major misconception you have. We are very proud of our association with Kalmbach, but they

have not purchased nor do they own ANY part of our publication. Modeler's Resource® magazine continues to be owned, lock, stock and barrel, by Adroit Publications, Inc., which is our own corporation. As we've said and published, time and time again, we made the decision to eliminate nudity long before we even began talking with Kalmbach for the purposes of being distributed by them. Again, I'd like to state that Kalmbach simply purchases a quantity of each issue of the magazine FROM us solely for the purposes of distributing it to the retailers they currently serve; much like ADS purchases the magazine FROM us for bookstores and newsstands. There is a major difference between owning a publication and simply being a distributor of it.

As far as being "just another model magazine" I have to respectfully disagree with you. Modeler's Resource covers much more of a variety than any other modeling publication out there and we're proud of that distinction. Please note our bi-line which reads, "For the Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Vehicular & Figure Model Builder" which has been there in one form or another since our debut issue, in 1994.

I feel sorry that the only reason you felt "attracted" to Modeler's Resource was because of the "bare breasts" and other nude parts of a resin or vinyl model. That, to me, is extremely sad.

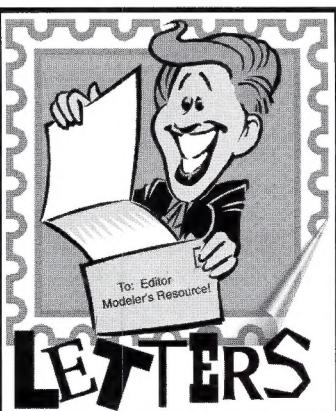
Actually, we continue to have "babes" in the magazine; however, they're evidently not portrayed in the context that you indicated you preferred. There are, though, magazines out there that cater specifically to that genre and we would direct you to them so that you will be content and pleased with the magazine(s) you do purchase.

And, yes, you are 100% correct on one point; you are most assuredly in the minority.

"Moral Victory?"

I agree that in light of the possibility of an expanded publication opportunity, sacrificing the presentation of nude/semi-nude kits was a clearly sound decision. I personally don't like it, since this means I must purchase another, more costly, less reliable mag to keep up on the world of "girl kits", but I understand it nonetheless. The fact that it has the added benefit of making the mag more accessible to younger readers is certainly a benefit.

What I DISAGREE with is folks who treat the more conservative look like some kind of moral victory. People like Michael Smith seem to think of nude art (and model building IS an art) as something perverted and wrong. Let's get something straight: there is a vast difference between nudity and smut...just as horror figure builders should be able to see a difference between horror (i.e., Dracula and Creature) and nauseatingly sick. Sadly, many don't. A cartoon that appeared many moons ago in Modeler's Resource clearly depicted this. It showed a man and his two boys ooohing and aaahing at models of monsters ripping heads off and intestines out of people, but in the next frame shows him reacting with disgust and covering his kids eyes when confronted with some nude kits! What hypocrisy!! Is this really the message we want to send our



kids???

My fiancee and I have a four-year old and I never had a problem showing him ANY of the pictures in the mag. I felt comfortable doing this because Fred NEVER put anything "smutty" in his mag. Little Alex even asked me why people build models of women with no clothes and I told him that it is because women are beautiful. If that is understandable to a (then) three-year old, why is it such an unfathomable mystery to some adults?

On the flip side of the coin, I also disagree with the man who dropped his subscription over the lack of nudity. This person ALSO fails to understand that this move was a business decision to get the mag into a wider market, NOT censorship! To do what he did implies that Modeler's Resource lacks worth without nudity...something which could not be FARTHER from the truth!

In closing, ALL the extremists out there need to "Get A Life!". I build primarily spaceships, but I do not feel I am some sort of social misfit who will rain doom on the modeling hobby for wanting to paint the occasional nude or scantily-clad female! Even my fiancee has expressed an interest in trying her hand at it. And don't even THINK of starting up with her...she's IRISH!

So, everybody just take a deep breath and accept the decision that Fred has made for HIS magazine for what it is, without trying to turn it into some moralistic crusade (OR revolution). You don't bash my making girl kits and I won't bash you for your blood-and-guts monsters. Deal? Let's support the ENTIRE Modeling Hobby.

Jim Van Cleave (e-mail)

- Jim, even though you have it wrong regarding the reason why we eliminated nudity, your continued support is certainly appreciated. When gore is presented on the screen, people are normally able to discern that it is faked, however realistic it may appear. Conversely, when a lovely young woman is nude or semi-nude on the same screen, it's normally plenty realistic and is done so to titillate. Of course, gore can have the same effect on some folks, I guess.

As far as the gentleman from last issue who dropped his subscription or in reference to Mr. Kajpust doing the same, if folks choose NOT to support this publication, that's within their right but they shouldn't have to feel as though they need to make excuses to do so.

Letters continued, page 62...

It's All Plastic To Me

What we have here are five kits. Two are based on characters from cult movies, one is based on a mythical creature that has only recently come to light and two are completely original designs. O.K., that's the easy part, now let's dig deeper, let's get into the building, the gluing, the puttying, the painting all that stuff! I will say one thing before I get to the individual kits, these kits were all great fun to build and paint. It's great to see such a variety of subjects and fine quality of work on the production of the kits. If you see something you like here, I urge you to support these kit producers and have a look at what they have to offer. You'll have a good time, trust me. And now, on with the kits!

El Chupacabra

Like Bigfoot or the Loch Ness Monster, the Chupacabra is a rarely seen creature that has become somewhat of a legend in certain circles. The first news of this elusive and dangerous critter came to our shores in 1995 from Puerto Rico and Mexico. Now, he's become so well known that even the X-Files has dedicated an episode to the legend. Just in case you're wondering, the name Chupacabra translates as "goat-sucker" which stems from the creature's vampiric attacks on goats and other livestock when it first appeared.

New to the resin scene, Disturbed Earth Productions has produced the first ever (or at least the first I've seen) resin kit depicting the Chupacabra in all its goat-biting glory. The bust is approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ scale, I think, since I've never actually seen or measured a Chupacabra. The kit consists of sixteen parts, the bust, five teeth (including that big, pointy center tooth for that all-important puncture) and ten head spikes. As you might assume, assembly is pretty simple. I decided on a bit of modification for my bust, though. I didn't like the way the head spikes looked standing straight up, so I cut their bases off at an angle and put them in at a backward slant. My logic is that when ol' Chupa is relaxed the spikes lean back and when he's aroused or hunting, they'll stand straight up. Anyway I like this look better. I used a bit of Magic Sculp epoxy putty around the base of the spikes to blend them into Chupa's Mohawk style hair-do.

Looking over the fully assembled bust, it strikes me that this guy bears a resemblance to the "gremlin on the wing" from the *Twilight Zone* Movie. He could easily be painted as any

kind of demon you could imagine. I chose to stick with the Chupacabra theme of the kit and went for more goat-like coloring. The sculpting of this bust is outstanding and gives the painter a lot to work with. The anatomy and surface texturing of the kit are perfect for a variety of

painting techniques.

I base coated the bust with Testors Dark Earth and used a bit of Light Earth on his chest. To bring out the

details in the skin texture, I stained the whole bust with dark brown, then drybrushed certain areas, like the hair and back with lighter shades of brown and tan. To help blend all the colors together, I misted on a light coat of Freak Flex Rose Flesh. The eyes were the most fun simply because of their size. I did a lot of color blending with the eyes, starting with a burgundy base, followed by a coat of yellow while the burgundy was still wet. This gave me a reddish rim around the eyes and a little bloodshot look. Following on the goat theme (thinking that Chupa might pick up characteristics from his victims) I gave him lozenge shaped pupils surrounded by a pale yellow iris. Head spikes got a coat a black and highlights in gray. Over all, I had a great time bringing out the "goat" in this guy and if you like the way he looks, you might want to give him a try.

Chupacabra is available from Disturbed Earth Productions for \$50. Visit their website at www.disturbedearth.com or call 310.715.2682.

Destroyer Demon

Another new company Creeps and Co. has been making the rounds with a line of new and interesting original kits. It's great to see some original designs being created by new companies, especially when they are so well produced. Tim Blough is the sculptor and owner of Creeps and judging from his output, he has a very vivid imagination. This particular critter is called the Destroyer and looks as if it could have easily leapt from the imagination of HP



Jim Bertges

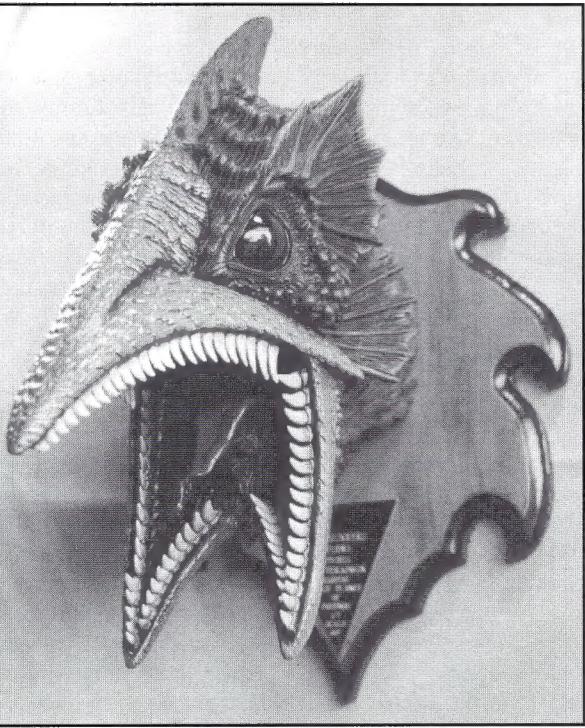
Lovecraft.

The kit consists of seven parts, the head, arms, body, legs and a base. It is well engineered and the parts fit is excellent after the pour plugs have been removed. There was a small amount of putty needed around the attachment points of the limbs and head and there were no bubbles or voids to deal with. Once assembled, I was faced with a dilemma, "How do I paint this guy?" The samples I saw were done in demon green and looked very nice, but I wanted something different. Since he is a "Destroyer" I decided to make him a fire demon and to try to paint him in a way that looked hot.

Thinking about hot things, lava popped into my mind. I recalled how lava seemed to glow from within, with the deeper sections glowing with molten light and the thicker, outer sections dark and charred looking. So, the approach I took was

the opposite of what would normally be done on a figure kit. The recessed areas that would usually be reserved for shadows would have to be light and surface areas that would be highlighted would be dark. I started out with spray cans of yellow, orange and red. First was an overall base coat of yellow. Then a coat of orange, sprayed at an angle to leave the deeper areas yellow. Finally a misting of red, sprayed from a distance allowing just enough paint on the surface to give it a red tint. The next step would be to further darken the thickest areas of the body, but first, the thought of lava came back to me. I remembered how lava often looks like it's cracked and broken as it flows with light areas showing through the cracks. I dug into my supply drawers and came up with a roll of Chart Pak Graphic Tape. Chart Pak is very thin (1/8 inch or less) tape used by Graphic Artists to lay in straight lines that they don't want to draw with a pen. I wound the tape around the Demon's legs and arms and body in a pattern that I hoped would simulate a cracking surface. Then it was time for the next step.

I got out my trusty Iwata Eclipse and a bottle of Medea Opaque Black and worked my way over the surface of the demon, darkening down his thickest muscles and bony areas. I was careful not to totally obscure all the color on the surface. After the opaque black, I added a coat of transparent black around the edges of the opaque areas. When everything had dried sufficiently, I removed the masking, revealing a network of red, yellow and orange lines crisscrossing the Demon's body. In order to brighten the lines a bit, I went over them with a little metallic gold in my Iwata. Then an overall coat of transparent red toned down and blended everything. I went back over the thinnest



areas of the Demon (fingers, toes and horns) and drybrushed bright yellow followed by light drybrushings of orange and yellow. I also used the airbrush to make the eye sockets and mouth interior glowing yellow as well. Other selected areas were also given a yellow drybrushing. The eyes were given bright red irises and glowing gold pupils. The final step was to airbrush a coat of Future floor polish over the whole surface to give him that slick, hot, almost melted look.

I'm pretty satisfied with the way the paint job turned out. It was a challenge, but I made myself do it, so I can't complain. If you're interested in this kit, you should also check out the rest of Creeps' line. You can contact Creeps and Co. at PO Box 900, Jacksonville, OR 97530 or call 503.258.8078.

Teradrox

HeadHunters Studio has done it again! They have created a totally original creature design, created a feasible biological background and setting for the creature and sculpted it into a fascinating "Trophy" for you to place on your wall. The idea behind the HeadHunters trophy kits is that you are an intergalactic hunter, traveling from planet to planet and returning to Earth with souvenirs of your hunts. I have two of these heads hanging in my office at work and they never fail to draw some kind of response from visitors. These kits are always well executed and beautifully sculpted and the surface textures make them a pleasure to paint.

The Teradrox is a three beaked bird from the planet Phenos. The literature that accompanies the kit describes the critter and his habitat, giving you plenty of background information to impress your visitors with. Sculptor Dave Britton has done an excellent job of providing the modeler with an array of challenging surface textures to bring to life. From the thatched look of the beak to the wrinkled neck skin and the incredibly detailed mouth interior, this kit is really a painter's delight.

I decided that since this is an alien creature from an alien world, it needed some unusual colors. So, I broke out the little spray cans of Testors metallics, intended for auto models, and started laying in the base coats. I used metallic green for the main color of the skin and neck, purple around the eyes, orange on the beak and bright red for the huge crest on the beast's head. At that point, I stepped back to look and with the orange beak blending into the red crest, this big bird reminded me of a huge, mutant Woody Woodpecker. With that in mind, I changed the green to blue and proceeded with the details. My Iwata

Eclipse and Medea acrylic colors were very useful in laying color into the deeply textured surfaces of this kit. Because I wanted colors to blend into each other, I did no masking on this kit. When I was satisfied with my surface colors, I applied a dark brown stain to the beak to bring out its texture. The teeth in this kit come in six separate rows, which fit into grooves inside the beaks. This makes them extremely easy to paint. The only other separate part is the tongue, which I also painted separately, but I installed it when it was time to detail the mouth. The eyes were painted with several alternating layers of Tamiya Clear Red and blue, giving a deep purple look. Final touches included a coat of Future for the interior of the mouth and for the eyes and a coat of semi gloss for the beak.

The head is hollow cast and HeadHunters provide screws to attach it to the resin plaque. The kit also includes a certificate of authenticity and an engraved nameplate to place on your trophy. Cost for the Teradrox is \$120 plus shipping. As a modeler, you owe it to yourself to look into this very interesting line of kits from **HeadHunters Studio**. Contact them at 690 4th Street, Ontario, OR 97914. Or by e-mail at britton@primenet.com.

Flesh Eating Beetle

You Science Fiction movie buffs will recognize this gleaming fellow (*kit shown on previous page*) from the movie *Flesh Gordon*, the R-rated parody of the 30s space opera. This stop-motion beastie was defeated by the noble hero in a duel to the death in the depths of Emperor Wang's castle. *Flesh Gordon* is noted by many movie fans because it gave a start to many special effects artists who went on to work on films like *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* and many others. The Beetle sequence was animated by Jim Danforth, who already had an established career at the time of *Flesh Gordon* and received an Academy Award nomination for his work in the film *When Dinosaurs Ruled The Earth*. The creator of this kit, John Deall, had access to the stop-motion puppet of the Beetle while making the kit, so this is about as authentic as you can get. I also understand that it is the exact size of the puppet (14 inches), so owning this kit is the next best thing to having the puppet itself.

The kit is well engineered and comes in thirteen parts, plus two glass eyes. The arms and legs have nice male and female mounting keys built in, eliminating the need to pin. Of course the keys and their receptacles need a bit of clean up, but the fit is excellent. The head is cast with a hollow section where the glass eyes fit; they are inserted through a hole inside the mouth. The instructions recommend filling the cavity with epoxy putty after installing the eyes, I used Magic Sculp. A plug that matches the mouth interior detail covers the hole and blends into the rest of the mouth. The feet of the Beetle are molded into the stone floor base, so you have to be careful when attaching the legs. The only pinning I did on this kit was the wings that attach to the Beetle's back. They are thick pieces of resin and I didn't trust glue alone to hold them on. I also used Magic Sculp to blend the wings to the body, but I discovered later that on the original model, the wings didn't blend in. My

mistake. There is very little other putty work involved on this kit and it assembles beautifully.

When it comes to paint, the Beetle is very simple. He is an overall gold or bronze metallic color. I used a bright gold spray, followed by Rub N Buff Antique Gold. My finish is bright and shiny, however, to be authentic, the Beetle needs to be aged and weathered somewhat. That is up to you.

If you are a fan of *Flesh Gordon* or of stop-motion, this is an excellent kit to own. As I said before, it's almost like owning an artifact from the film itself because of its authenticity. The kit is available from **John Deall/Visual Engineering, 501 W. Glenoaks Bl., #703, Glendale, CA 91202**. Cost is \$115, which includes shipping.

Eleanor

Last, but not least, comes the lovely Eleanor from *MojoResin*. Eleanor is the voluptuous female fairy-like character from Ralph Bakshi's animated cult classic, *Wizards*. She's a bouncy, funny character who is attempting to learn the ways of magic from the main character Avatar. The scene depicted in this kit shows Eleanor after she has been captured by a tribe of tiny fairy people. They have her trapped with her hands fused inside two stone pillars while they try to decide her fate. Fortunately, her mentor, Avatar shows up in time to rescue her.

This kit is completely true to the details of the movie, right down to the spiky critters at the top of the pillars. Sculptor Vance Rudzinskas has captured Eleanor in all her cartoony pulchritude and has done a fine job with the base as well. Eleanor herself is cast as one piece and is flawless, as are the stone base and pillars. The gargoyles suffered from a plentitude of air bubbles on their faces and ears and needed a good deal of putty for repairs. The kit comes with a paper template so the modeler can create her wings. The wings as depicted on the template, however seemed a bit small. I used the template as a base and increased the size of the wings to match what I'd seen in the movie. I cut the wings from a sheet of clear plastic and airbrushed them transparent blue.

This is also a simple kit to paint. Fleshtones, white clothing, black hair, gray stone and a bit of blue for the gargoyles. The only snag I encountered was attaching the wings I made. They had to attach at a point where her back curved inward and even five-minute epoxy wasn't strong enough to hold them there. I finally attached the wings with a small screw, covered it over with Magic Sculp and painted that in a flesh tone. The wings might have been more flexible if I'd made them from card stock, but then they wouldn't be transparent.

I enjoyed this kit and you will too if you're a fan of *Wizards* or if you have a thing for fairies. It is available from **Mojo Resin, 3373 B Beacon #6, North Chicago, IL 60064, Phone/Fax 847.473.1821**.

There you have it. Five kits worthy of your attention. You'll have a good time with any of them and all of these producers have a line-up of interesting kits to tickle your fancy. I'll be back next time with another pile of plastic for your building pleasure.



Updating A...

with Philip Gore

Classic Spaceship!

America's infatuation with rockets and spaceships has been around long before man walked on the moon. Movies from the 1950s like WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, FORBIDDEN PLANET, and DESTINATION MOON set people's imagination on fire. Many of these early Sci-Fi flicks were very successful and captured the public's attention. Always at the heart of these movies were the space vehicles used to propel man to the stars. Several early plastic model manufacturers were quick to pick up on this "fad," and model spaceships (real and fictional) were available in stores by the mid 1950s. Strombecker was a manufacturer that produced some of these kits. One of the subjects Strombecker chose was the "Rocket To The Moon" spaceship from the Tomorrowland section of the Walt Disney World theme park. The Strombecker kit was a civilian rocket, and the decals included were for a TWA passenger liner. When Strombecker went out of business, this kit became a rare collector's item.

In the early 1990s Glencoe Models, Inc. was formed. This company acquired toolings of classic kits (originally from Aurora, ITC, Hawk, Lindberg, etc.) that had not been produced for many years. Building the "re-issue" of this classic Disney "Rocket To The Moon" model is the subject of this article.

A DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

This model is a great example of how spaceships were envisioned during the 50s. Its lines were sleek, clean, graceful and obviously designed to be more attractive to the eye than practical or functional. Since the mold for this kit is about 40 years old, all of the parts required work to improve their appearance. During the 1950s, model manufacturers did not have the technology (or in some cases, the desire) to create the museum quality kits that are produced today by companies like Tamiya and Hasegawa, so extra work was required to make a good-looking model.

The first item to change was filling in the openings of the clear plastic cockpit section and passenger windows (Figure 1). The clear pieces did not fit well, and I felt better looking windows could be made with decals after the model was painted. The next improvement was to add styrene pieces along the walls of the recessed areas where the landing legs retract. Doing this created a uniform "box" and did much to improve the appearance (Figure 2). At this point the three pieces that make up the main hull were glued together. There were big gaps between these pieces that had to be filled with superglue, then tediously sanded out. A flat piece of sheet styrene was used in place of the kit exhaust nozzle that fit up to the bottom of the hull (Figure 2). A big, flared engine exhaust nozzle was desired, so I raided my spares box and used parts from a couple of other spaceship models (Figure 3). Finally, the nose tip piece was glued into place and sanded to match the shape of the rest of the hull.

SUPPORT LEG MODIFICATIONS

Once again heavy modifications had to be made to produce good-looking parts. After the main landing leg halves were glued together and the seam line sanded out, the bottom opening of each part was covered with a piece of sheet styrene. The center of each of these pieces was drilled out to accommodate brass extension struts. Brass rod pieces were then measured, cut and glued into the bottom of each landing leg assembly. Next, the kit landing leg support rods were replaced with pieces of small diameter wire (Figure 4).

A small piece of sheet styrene was added to the inside of each leg assembly, and holes were drilled into each piece where the wire support leg rods would attach. The kit landing pads (feet) had their extension struts cut off and holes drilled in them to accommodate the brass rods in each landing leg assembly. The main hull and the leg support assemblies were given a final fit-up test to check alignment before being painted (Figure 5).

PAINTING AND DECALING

I decided to paint and decal the model with colors and emblems commonly used on NASA modern day launch vehicles. The exterior colors most often seen are white, natural metal, light gray and black. First, the main hull was painted Gunze Sangyo Light Gray (No. 338). The hull was then oversprayed with a weak wash of dark gray to break up the color, and

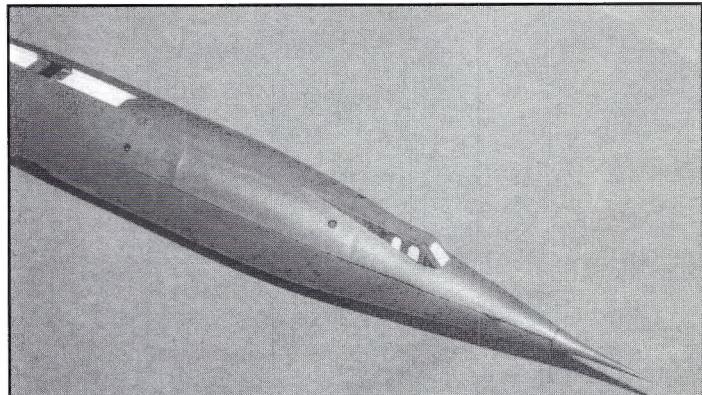


Figure 1: Pieces of styrene and superglue were used to fill in all of the kit window openings.

Figure 2: The kit landing leg bays were poorly molded, so various styrene pieces were added to improve the looks. The bottom of the hull was covered with a piece of styrene that had a hole drilled in the center.

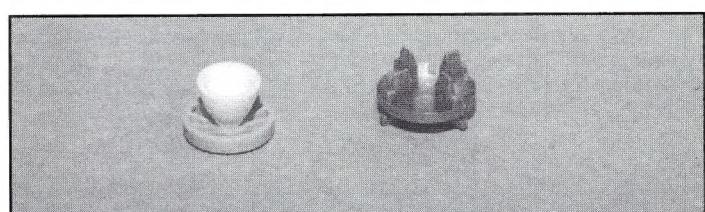


Figure 3: Substituting the kit engine exhaust for a larger, flared exhaust improved the overall model appearance.

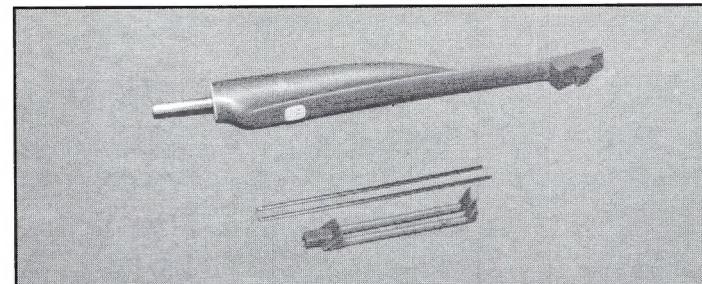


Figure 4: Landing leg modifications included using brass tubing and small diameter wire to replace kit parts.

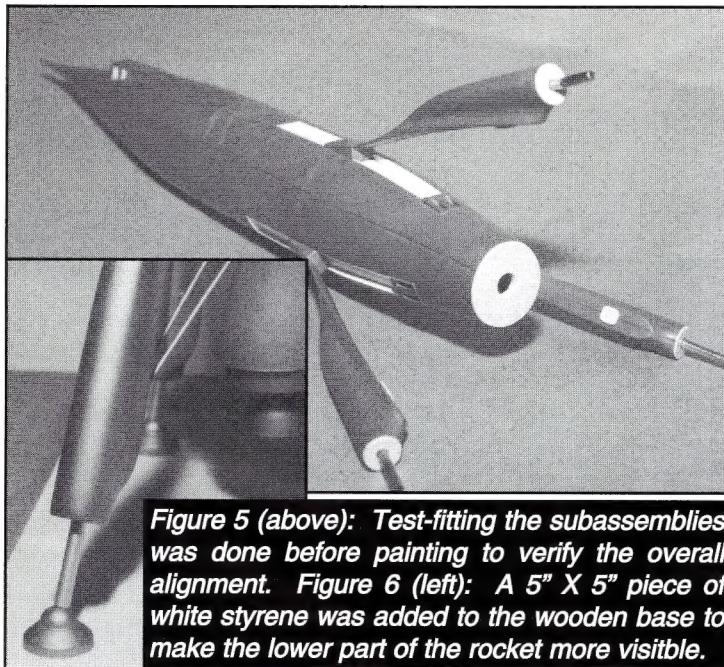


Figure 5 (above): Test-fitting the subassemblies was done before painting to verify the overall alignment. Figure 6 (left): A 5" X 5" piece of white styrene was added to the wooden base to make the lower part of the rocket more visible.

give a weathered effect. After it was dry, the hull was masked off except for the nose tip area, bottom section, and the three recessed leg retraction areas. These were painted with Model Master Aluminum (No. 1418), then oversprayed with a weak black wash (again to add a weathering effect and realistic appearance).

Next, the landing leg assemblies, landing pads, and wire support rods were painted the same way (aluminum followed by a black wash). The two replacement engine nozzle pieces were painted with Model Master Burnt Metal (No. 1415). Finally, to add a little color variation, the brass extension struts were repainted aluminum and polished with SnJ Metal Powder. At this point, all of the sub-assemblies were glued together. The decals used consisted of two American flags, two NASA "worm" logos/NASA standard emblems, black letters (to spell out "UNITED STATES"), cockpit/passenger windows, and a few access panel warnings. The decals for the access door and passenger/cockpit windows came from a 1/200 scale airliner set, which seemed appropriate since this is a 1/200 scale model representing an interplanetary personnel transport. When decaling a model like this it is hard to know when to stop. There is a fine line between coming up with something colorful, while trying to come across with a credible spacecraft from the not too distant future. After all of the decals were on, the entire model was given a "light" high-pressure coat of Future to create a uniform semi-gloss finish. A 6"X 8" stained wooden base was used for a permanent stand.

To give the metal colored lower section of the rocket a contrasting background, a 5" X 5" piece of thin white sheet styrene was cut and glued to the top of the wooden stand (**Figure 6**). When the model was glued to this piece of styrene, the project was finished.

PUTTING THE PAST INTO THE FUTURE

Although NASA will probably never make a spaceship that looks like this, this was a fun project because it was fast (only 51 hours) and the only limits for right or wrong were set by my imagination. My intention was to present what a NASA passenger transport spaceship might look like in 75 to 100 years. If anyone looks at the model and argues with my vision I can always say, "Come see me in 100 years and we will talk about it!"

MR

SOURCES

Model:

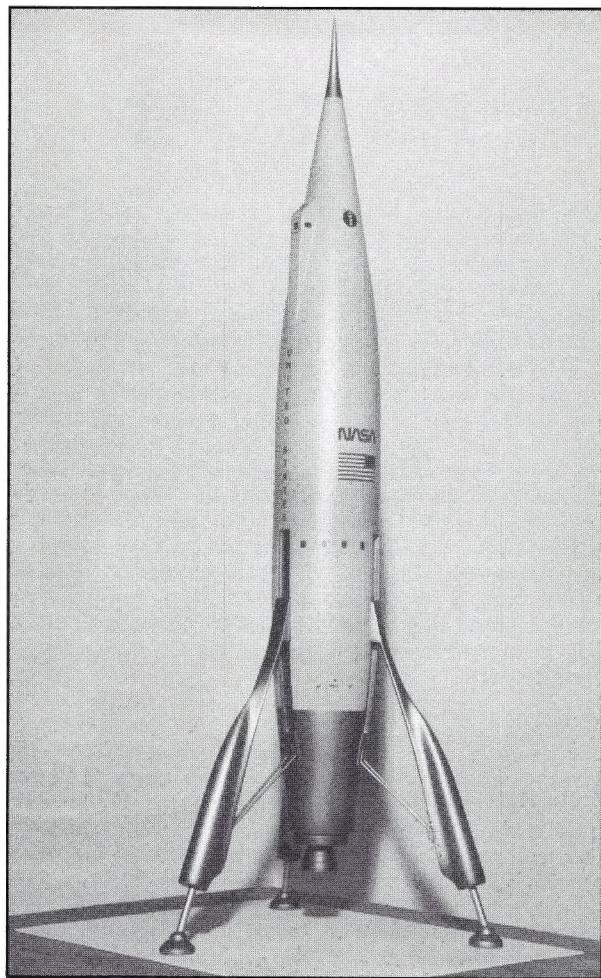
Glencoe Models, Inc.
P.O. Box 846
Northboro, MA 01532

Decals:

Liveries Unlimited
P.O. Box 3202
Boynton, FL 33424
(1996 IPMS Nat'l Convention Special)

Microscale
P.O. Box 11950
Costa Mesa, CA 92627
(1994 IPMS National Convention Special)

Sheet Styrene:
Evergreen
Kirkland, WA 98034



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**FROM THE
LAIR
OF THE
Craftbeast
With
Bill Craft**

All I can say about the theatrical release of *Godzilla 2000* is, "It's about time!" The last "G" film released here in the good old USA was "*Godzilla 1985*." Six epic films featuring the Titan of Destruction have been made since then. It is only recently that five of the six have been made available to the American audience. Toho, who have been making the "G" films since 1954 had originally decided to end the series in 1995 with the ultimate demise of their franchise in "*Godzilla Vs. Destroyah*." We saw the mighty beast from the east go through a nuclear meltdown and dissolve before our very eyes. The reason for the demise by Toho was that TriStar Pictures was going to pick up the ball and bring old 'Zilla into the world of America and feature a giant budget and state of the art effects.

NOW PLAYING!

**MIGHTY TITANS BATTLE
TO DECIDE THE FATE OF THE WORLD!**



**GODZILLA
VS.
ORGА**

ACTION FIGURE CONVERSIONS

Well, we all know by now that the experiment failed. Toho was not very happy the way their icon was handled and decided to resurrect their *Godzilla* again. And of course it was a monster hit with the fans. Our beloved anti-hero is back with a new look and power. The 23rd offering from Toho, "*Godzilla 2000 Millennium*," the title shortened for us westerners to "*Godzilla 2000*," is here. In this film, *Godzilla* battles the monster *Orga*. Nuff said.

THE FIGURES.

Here is another case of having no kits available to compose a battle sequence. There have been several Japanese vinyl kits produced of the new Godzilla as well as expensive resin ones. However, in the case of Godzilla's opponent, Orga, there is only one very limited, very expensive and unusually small version of this beastie in kit form. From what I understand only a handful were made. Licensing entanglements must be in place over there in the land of Kaiju. The same kind of nonsense that permeates the hobby over here in the United States.

So, what is a modeler to do when he wants to build a diorama featuring the latest rumble in Tokyo? One must resort to using and modifying the cool action figures produced by Bandai. Fortunately for us Kaiju lovers, Bandai makes excellent action figures. So with a little work and a rerendering job, you can have that battle scene you always wanted.

Now you have to figure out how the two creatures will interact with one another. I went over this a few issues ago when I transformed the two McFarlane Species figures in a fisticuff encounter. I took the two beasties and posed them in a grappling position. I then superglued all the poseable joints into a locked position. Take your time and decide how your beasties will interact before gluing, for once you glue those joints, it would be a hassle to rebreak them.



THE GODZILLA FIGURE.

I was in the mist of thumbing through the Winter Hobby Japan Extra, when I noticed an article from a guy who was modifying the very same action figure that I was going to do. Even though the Japanese language is beyond my comprehension, I was able to study the photos and adapt some of his techniques for my own conversion.

The process of mass producing action figures has its limitations in regards to detail. The most challenging alteration was to the head. Zilla's teeth were backed by a solid piece of vinyl. The illusion is that since the background piece is dark and the teeth are rendered white, it would not show up much. This is a toy afterall. The first order of buisness is to carefully remove the lower jaw with an hobby knife. Cut very slowly and carefully because you will need to reglue it into place again once the next stage of our conversion is finished. Removing the lower jaw will make it easier to excavate the excess vinyl material between the teeth. Be very careful here! Work slowly and begin to carve out the excess vinyl. Use care when carving too close to the teeth. You don't want to cut them off. If you do accidentally cut one off while carving, just use a drop of super glue and put it back in place. This is a slow and tedious process, but when you finally get all the excess from the teeth it will look really great.

Now you can rerender the mouth sections and teeth. Once this is done, reglue the lower jaw back to the head. Putty if necessary.

One part of the action figure was curious to me. It was the section between the main body and the tail. There was a strange gap between the main body and the tail section. I decided to slice a "V" cut into this section and bring the pieces closer together so it would look more natural.

All the glued joints were then puttied and resculpted to blend with the rest of the body with Magic Sculp™. After the Magic Sculp had cured, I matched the color of the body and rendered in the color on the seams.

As far as the colors for the rendering are concerned, I simply enhanced what was there. A coating of Bon Artiste Charcoal Antiquing Stain was used for the accents. A bit of drybrushing with light shades of green followed. I then rendered the claws, toenails, fins and eyes. Now it's time for ol' Zilla's cage match opponent.



THE MONSTER ORGA.

Orga was not as involved as his opponent, but the blending of the open seams were. The main open seam that runs around the entire top half of the monster's back had to be addressed. A thin bead of glue around the entire perimeter of the seam locked down the top half of the back to the lower body. Magic Sculp was then worked all the way around the seam.

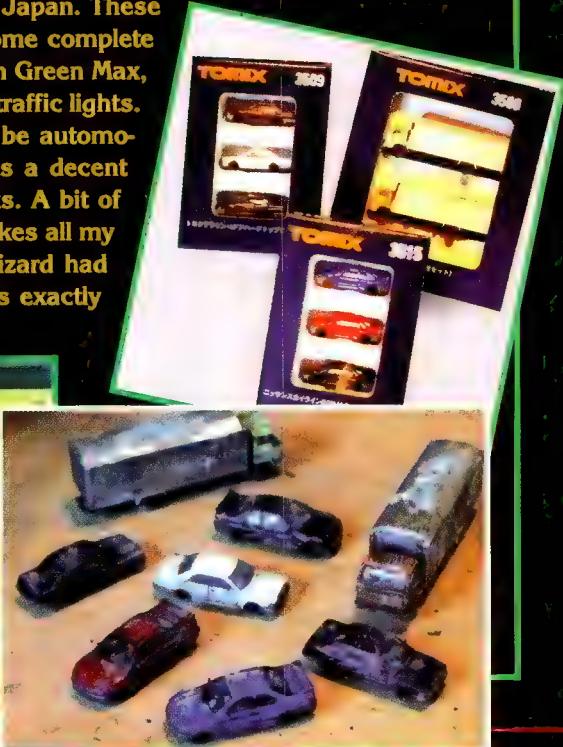
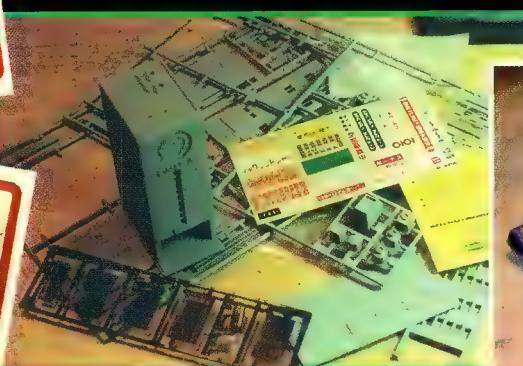
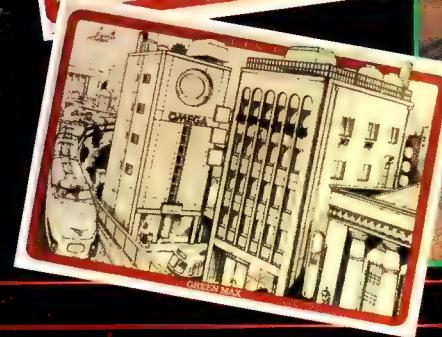
I decided to "V" cut one of the arms to show some more animation in the figure. A bit of Magic Sculp blended the seam nicely. As far as Orga's skin color, one can only guess. Just about every book I have on this film suggests a different shade. So what is a Kaiju fan to do but take a good educated guess? The monster's claws, toenails, teeth and eyes were also rerendered.

Both beasties were given a coat of Testors™ Semi-Gloss spray to seal in the new paint. I then brushed on a highgloss to the eyes, mouths, claws and toenails. Now it's time for the battle arena.



THE MONSTERS' PLAYPEN.

I love the miniature work in films of this nature. The widespread urban destruction that is caused when two giant monstrosities decide to have it out is astounding. For my battle scenario, I managed to locate from a train shop some "N" scale Japanese buildings from Green Max of Japan. These buildings are in styrene kit form and come complete with Japanese language signs. Also from Green Max, I found telephone poles, street lights and traffic lights. Of course with all the traffic there must be automobiles and trucks. Tomix of Japan makes a decent assortment of "N" scale autos and trucks. A bit of charcoal stain and some drybrushing makes all my showroom vehicles look like some big lizard had been tossing them around. Maybe that's exactly what's going to happen to them!



Alrighty then! Time for the Mighty Monster Mayhem Sandbox. First of all I wanted lots and lots of rubble. I wanted the streets buried in debris and the dust from that debris all over everything. Nothing pretty and clean would be shown.

The first thing you want to do is place your combatants in the arena so you can figure out exactly where to place the surrounding buildings and larger pieces of debris.

The next thing to do is to construct all the buildings and place them in the desired locations on a 9 x 12 pine base. I purposely left the center open where the beasties would play. The remains of a flattened building would lie beneath the two beasties. I then began to spray glue into place different sizes of Talus from the Woodland Scenics line. Next, came small cinders which were spray glued on top of the Talus. I then started placing larger pieces of rubble on the base which consisted of leftover styrene parts from the buildings. The addition of twisted telephone poles with drooping wires, light posts and street signs followed. I made sure that hardly none of them were erect.

The ground rubble was then treated to airbrushed colors of greys and browns. Generous drybrushings of white and grey followed. In wanting to keep the entire area as devasted looking as possible, I went back and forth with the colors to ensure the proper mood of the diorama. Nothing was brightly colored on the floor area of the base. If I saw something that stood out, I sprayed it with Shading Grey to knock it back.

I then took my Dremel™ tool with a wicked looking router bit attached to it and began to chew up the buildings. Big beasties thrashing about would do a lot of damage to buildings.

The buildings were rendered in various shades of urban city colors such as greys, blues, greens and blacks. All of these colors were then airbrushed with Goldens Shading Grey. A generous drybrushing of white and greys followed. Towards the bottoms of each building the colors got darker to simulate rising dust.

My "N" scale vehicles which I had already prepared were then added to the rubble. They were glued in all manner of positions to simulate their strewn about condition.

The Japanese decal signs came next. With this addition the buildings really started to give me the feeling of a typical day in the life of a Japanese citizen that has to contend with this type of urban renewal. The decals once placed into position were then treated to mistings of Shading Grey to give them the dusty look.

I say that you can never have too much destruction in a diorama like this. You can keep adding on to a base like this for a long time.

I hope I did not leave anything out here. Even the Beast gets carried away on some projects.





Of all the types of modeling projects I do, nothing gives me more satisfaction than creating something out of nothing. Compiling a bunch of parts and blending them together to create a single harmonious frame of art.

You learn so much tackling a project like this. Things you never thought would work, somehow by experimenting, does in the end.

Since action figures are the "In Craze" thing right now, why not take advantage of all they have to offer? They are, for the most part, cheap and sculpted really well.

Don't get me wrong here. I am a die hard resin and vinyl beast. Doing these types of projects is a nice getaway from inhaling resin dust and slicing up my fingers while cutting through soft vinyl.

Food for thought! Toho has commenced filming on the 24th entry into motion picture's longest running series with the big guy back in action against giant mutated insects in "Godzilla vs. Megagiras," due out in theatres in Japan, December 2000.

So until your hometown is attacked by some rampaging Kaiju, keep your modeling fun!



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Ahhh! The Atmosphere!

Mad Model Party™



*Photos by Jim Bertges, Fred DeRuvo
and Jerry Shaw*



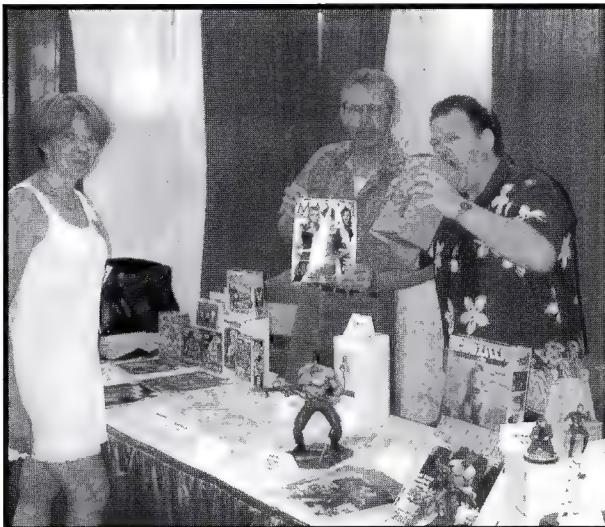
Above: Product from Cellar Cast

Below: The lovely Erin Gray



**Frank Darabont, director of
Shawshank Redemption and The
Green Mile checked out the party.**





Above left: Part of the crew from MR: Justin Bertges, Slivia & Rachel DeRuvo, Jerry Buchanan, Bill Craft, Bob Egrini, David & Fred DeRuvo, Cindy & Mike Morgan, Jim Bertges and Joe Graziano. **Above right:** Joy Burbridge, Gordy Dutt and Larry Burbridge representing Kitbuilders magazine.

The Mad Model Party is like an old pair of comfortable shoes; you sometimes aren't sure when they've gotten past the point of being comfortable enough to warrant a new pair or whether or not you should just continue wearing them because they are *still* a bit pleasing to your feet and they've got some potential left in them. At what point do you stop and say, "Hey, these shoes are getting old. Let's dump 'em and get a new pair?" In another way, with respect to the MMP, it tends to seem as if the buzzards continue circling, scanning the horizon for the latest kill or at least what they perceive as something that is surely soon to die.

The MMP is a show with a bit of a checkered past that it has been struggling to overcome. Unlike a number of other shows, who have had the opportunity of growing solidly because the same group of people have been involved in the promo-

tion and production from the beginning to this day, the MMP hasn't been so lucky. With the best intentions in the world, Mad Model Party came into being solely because of Dan Platt, in 1994. His plan was to create an event that would bring people together under one roof to share the excitement of the time, to sing the praises of the Garage Kit industry and to help it flourish. I vividly remember that show. It was the first time that I met many of the folks who have not only become names in the industry, but people who, over time, have become true friends.

I remember the endless line of people waiting to get into that august event at the Beverly Garland Hotel in Los Angeles where the first MMP was held, wondering all the while, "How will all these people fit in that one little room?!" Many of the companies that were there then no longer exist today, which is testament to the fact that

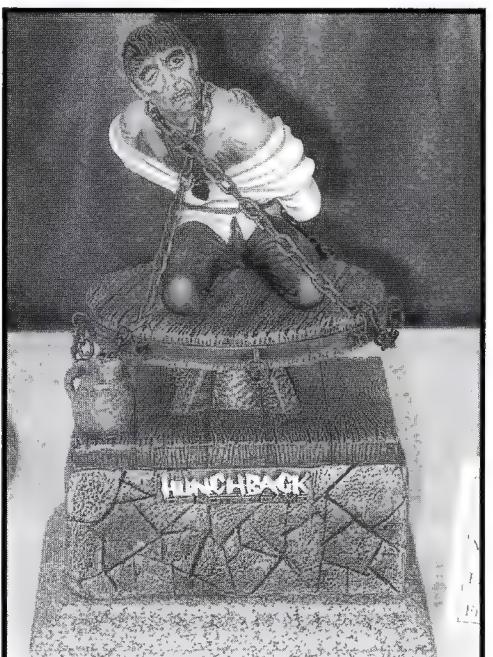
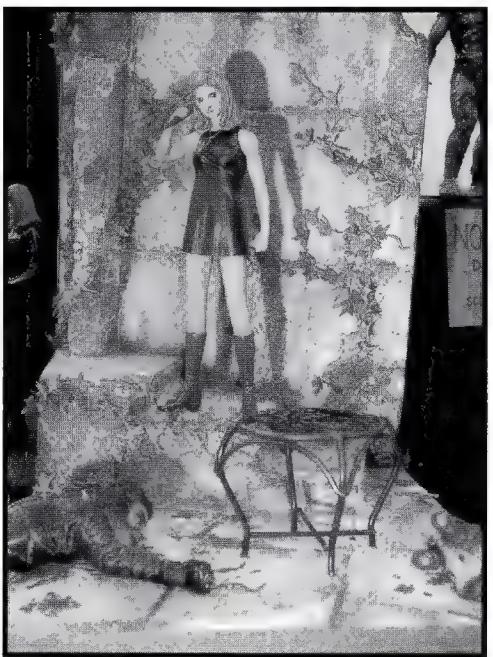
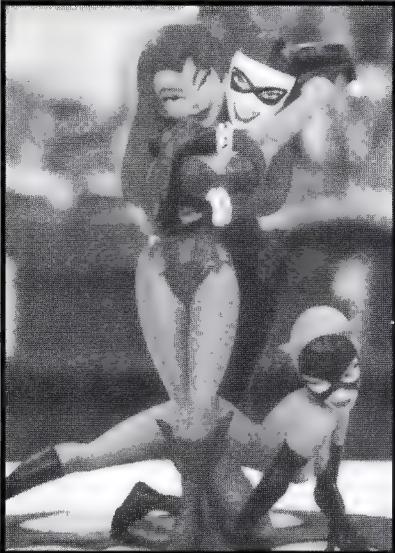
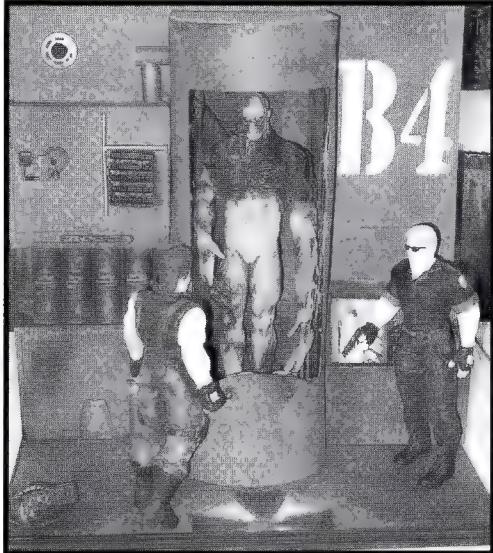
this particular niche industry is, and always will be, in a constant state of flux.

The second year of the MMP saw change as it moved to another location, bigger and better and closer to the LAX airport in the hopes of making it easier for out-of-town guests to fly in and attend. Once again, the show was promoted by Dan Platt's "Barker Bros" company, and things were starting to look up. While there were more dealers, because of the location, it seemed that fewer local people wanted to drive out that far to LAX and who can really blame them? If you've ever tried to negotiate Los Angeles freeways, it can be a bear, to say the least. It's where the term "road rage" has special meaning.

The third show, promoted now by Sideshow, Inc., was relocated to the Pasadena Convention Center. Here, it spread its wings and there seemed to be almost a carnival atmosphere. Great facil-

Below left: Phil Lublin of Lunar Models and Mike Evans of Alchemy Works were on hand as vendors. **Below right:** Robb Rotondi and sculptor David Grant of Needful Things.





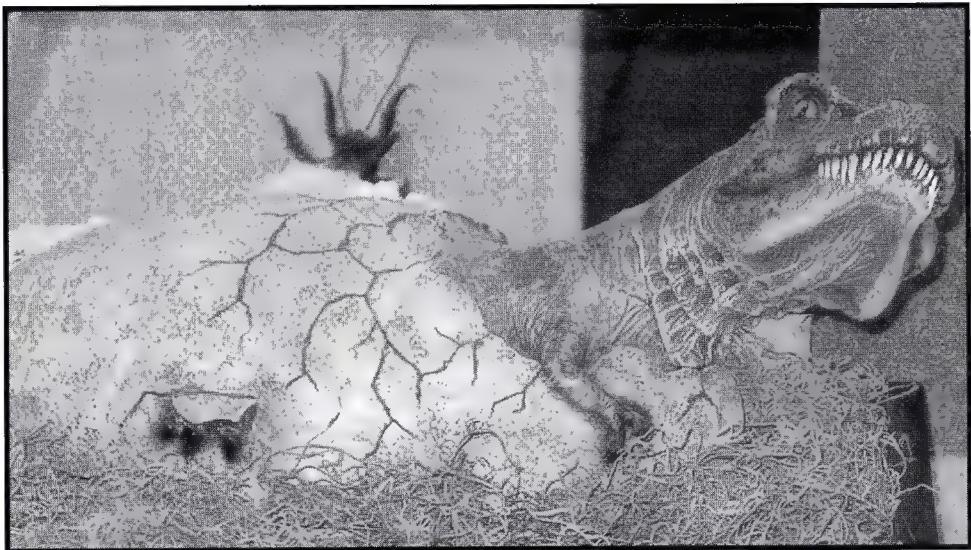
ity, great location and lots of kit dealers.

The fourth show, again reconvened at the Pasadena Convention Center but by this time, the originator of the event was gone, though the company he began remained as promoter of the show. Internationally, the show was a success because of people who came from all over the globe to celebrate the convention of modeling. There were more seminars, more dealers and more celebrities.

By the fifth year, the Mad Model Party had begun to lose its steam. The name was changed to the Mad Monster Party to reflect more of an inclusion of the toy market. This was due, in part I'm sure, to the fact that models themselves seemed to be fading a bit into the background. Toys were coming more to the fore and that didn't appear to be so odd since many sculptors who created the kits that we were purchasing, made their full-time living by sculpting toys. Models for many of them had always been a sideline. For me, this was probably the saddest year of the show because the atmosphere of fun had begun to seriously fade. It was now "business is, as business does." Somehow, the MMP had become very corporate looking. More than one dealer suggested that it was very much like a glorified swap meet. It just wasn't a party anymore. Now remember, in this particular industry, rumors start quickly and live long and prosper, eventually taking on a life of their own. Such was the case with this MMP. No sooner was the show over for the weekend than rumors began to circulate that the MMP was indeed dead. Other people began stepping up to the plate to offer new ventures. We, ourselves, stepped up to help sponsor another show in the area called, Fantasimonium. It was fun; it was exciting for the most part, but it wasn't anywhere near what the MMP used to be at its height and it wasn't necessarily trying to be an imitation either, although many thought it was or should have been.

For year number six (the one no one thought would actually happen), the Mad Model Party returned under completely new management. Sideshow, Inc., had sold the rights and the show moved to a larger room at the Pasadena Convention Center and took on new life and meaning. We came on board as one of the sponsors of the model contest, alongside Creature Features. For those who attended, it was truly a breath of fresh air. Gone was the stuffiness that had somehow seeped into the last few shows. This Mad Model Party was beyond a doubt fun, with a capital "F". Attendance was not necessarily as great as it had been in the heyday of the Mad Model Party but those who came enjoyed the camaraderie and friendly atmosphere that had been absent.

Year number seven - July 2000 - ushered in its own set of problems. A date change occurred; the dropout of one of the promoters took place and several other factors had the rumor mill running full tilt again. Many believed the party had been cancelled, not simply moved to another date. Some dealers had to drop out because of previous commitments and simply couldn't attend the show's new date, but here is the upshot: For those who came to the Mad Model Party this past July 8th & 9th, the atmosphere (Ahh! The atmosphere!) was friendly and refreshing. There were many new faces along with the diehards that came every year. Business may not have been as brisk and the attendance may have been down over the previous years, but to many, it didn't matter. What mattered was that the Mad Model Party continued and



Pages 20 and 21 showcase some of the dynamic models that were entered Into the Massive Model Contest of the 2000 MMP!



offered something to those who can't afford to get to Kentucky or New Jersey or Chicago.

With the onslaught of the Internet and mail order and the fact that just about every small garage kit company out there now takes credit cards (unheard of in the early days!), it becomes a reasonable question to ask: how long should shows continue? How long will they be viable?

Now, call me headstrong, call me a positive thinker, but don't call me an ostrich with my head in the sand. I'm well aware of the highs and lows of the MMP. I'm also very much in sync with the needs of vendors and individual modelers because I am both of those. Although the vendor goes to a show to make money, it's also the best type of venue going where they can provide personal service to their customers and meet those faithful souls who have been purchasing their product for years. It's the people that prompt us to keep coming back and make shows, like the MMP, the best that they can be.

True, the Mad Model Party has not been phenomenally successful every year for each of the past seven years since its inception, but does that mean we stop trying? Does that mean we give up? Does that mean we close the lid and play Taps? When does it become truly the end for what has been THE show on the West Coast?

We had fun at this year's show and we are planning on having even more fun at the next Mad Model Party in 2001 and we hope that you will be part of that fun. In the meantime, enjoy these photos; relive the moments! Visit our Internet site for more updates and we will keep you posted on developments. — Fred DeRuvo



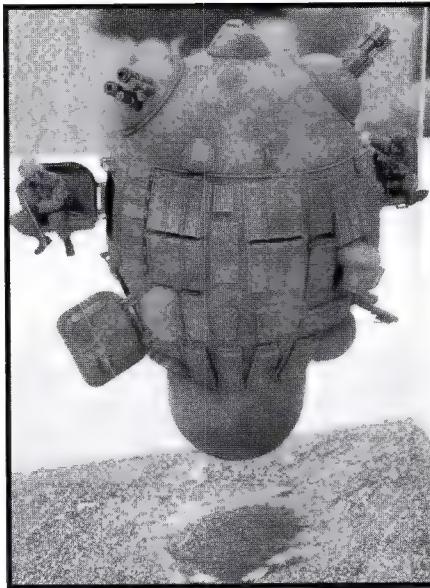
Mad Model Party 2000 - It's Alive! Alive!!

with Jim Bertges

Despite rumors of its demise, date changes and the pessimistic grumblings of even some of its most ardent supporters (myself included), the Mad Model Party is alive and well. Even though this year's show wasn't as large as in past years, the one thing that counts - the enthusiasm of the modeling public - was there and it was there in abundance. The show was combined with a Science Fiction memorabilia show called Starcon which featured toys, movie stills, posters and a host of other items that the crowd seemed to enjoy. That also meant a number of celebrities were on hand to provide autographs and chat with their fans.

Even with the celebrities and the memorabilia and toys, models were still the main focus of the MMP. It was great to see many long time supporters of the show back and to meet with long distance friends who hadn't made it to the show before. Local dealers and folks from across the country included; Mike Parks of Mad Labs, Gordy Dutt and Larry Burbridge of KitBuilders and Mojo Resin, Joe Sid from Neo ModelTech, Needful Things, Dimensional Designs, Cellar Cast, Michael Burnett Productions, Lunar Models at their first Mad Model Party and many others. There was an excellent selection of both new and vintage items available.

The highlight of the show for many were the numerous demos and hands-on modeling workshops which were organized and supervised by Tom Grossman and his two sons. Modelers in attendance were treated to demonstrations by Fred DeRuvo on the use of



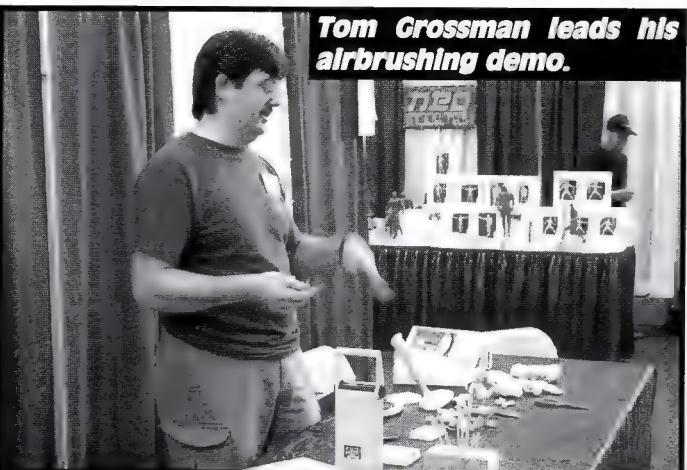
More MMP Pictures Next Page!

Contest Winner

Jim Bertges and Joe Graziano lead a scratch-building seminar.



Tom Grossman leads his airbrushing demo.



Mike & Cindy Morgan lead another demonstration on using crafts for modeling.



materials from Woodland Scenics, Mike and Cindy Morgan on utilizing craft materials and techniques in modeling, Tom Grossman on airbrushing, masking and assembling resin kits as well as a look at scratchbuilding and kit bashing by Joe Graziano and myself. After viewing the demos, attendees were invited to the hands-on area where they were able to create their own groundwork with materials provided by Woodland Scenics, build styrene kits provided by Polar Lights and use airbrushes and compressors provided by Iwata/Medea to paint an exclusive MMP troll bust sculpted and cast by Mark Krabbenhoff of Soaring Eagle Arts. There were valuable lessons learned and many happy modelers taking home finished kits and painted busts.

Contest entries were down this year, but the quality of the entries was truly outstanding. Judges had a difficult time selecting just three winners in each category, but when they had completed their job and the votes were tabulated, the winners walked off with trophies, cash awards, merchandise from Creature Features, subscriptions to *Modeler's Resource* and Polar Lights kits. The creativity and work that went into each of the contest entries made them all worthy of recognition.

In spite of the difficulties encountered in getting Mad Model Party 2000 off the ground, the show came off as a success. The atmosphere of friendliness and camaraderie among all those in attendance made these two days in Pasadena a memorable experience for everyone. Next year's show is now in the planning stages and promises to preserve the best features of this and past shows and provide the fun and excitement expected from the West Coast's premiere model kit show.



One of the Make N Takes sponsored by Medea - Iwata airbrushes.

Fred DeRuvo explains landscaping techniques. Ernesto Cornejo holds his finished landscape he completed in the Woodland Scenics Make N Take.



DOWN THE PREHISTORIC TRAIL



AS FOR TWO DOGS, WHICH ARE BORN TO SHED, DAVID PETTIBONE'S DINOSAURS! IS BACK IN ILLUSTRATED ENCYCLOPEDIA OF DINOSAURS™

By Mike Fredericks



From Polar Lights
New Dino Kits!



I've freshly returned from The Mad Model Party in Pasadena, California (perhaps not so fresh by the time you read this) where I had a great time as usual. I also, as usual, have lots of new dinosaur model kits to build or just talk about. Let's talk about a few of them now, shall we?

Playing Mantis, Polar Lights division, announces the release of three brand new injection molded plastic dinosaur model kits. You all know that Polar Lights has been producing original model kits and re-issues of old Aurora model kits for a number of years now. Most recently, The Bellringer (Hunchback of Notre Dame), Guillotine and Witch. When I heard a rumor that they were going to produce dinosaur kits, I wondered if they would redo the Aurora Prehistoric Scenes models (unlikely, as Monogram and now Revell have been doing that for a long time) or producing brand new dinosaur models. I was pleasantly surprised to find out that they were releasing three totally new dinosaur model kits under the old Aurora brand name Tyrannosaurus, Pteranodon and Triceratops. In the tradition of Aurora's 1960s and 1970s kits, these are fun dinosaur "monsters" not attempts at scientifically accurate prehistoric animals. Polar Lights sent review copies both to me and to this magazine and its my privilege now to tell you about them.

Unlike the original Aurora Prehistoric Scenes dinosaur kits of the 70s, these kits cannot be posed. They do carry the Aurora name which is now a trademark of Cinemodels, Inc. of South Bend, Indiana. Each of the three plastic kits comes in a full color box with a photo of the completed model on the outside. They are snap-together kits so no glue is necessary and parts are molded in different colors of plastic so they could even go unpainted. I doubt if many of you reading this would not use glue or not use paint on a model. In fact, the animal is cast in a different color of plastic from the base but is still only one color itself and some of the parts are going to need putty to close the gaps (or a lot of glue). Also included with each are an assembly instruction sheet and a background diorama for display.

At the Mad Model Party, I met David Archawsky of Araglyph Design, who, with Steve Lynn, was the sculptor of the T. rex and Pteranodon for this series. Again, these dinosaurs are not attempts at museum quality sculptures, but the kits have character and are in lively, animated poses. At about \$10 each, the price is certainly right. These are perfect models for children and beginning modelers. I'm sure we'll soon be seeing some very well done build-ups of these kits from seasoned modelers too. The Aurora Dinosaurs series are available in stores now (including Toys R Us) or from Triceratops Hills Ranch in Colorado. 303-741-4712 <http://www.linkandpinhobbies.com>

It has been a while since I was sent a dinosaur review kit from Charlie McGrady's CM Studio, but this time I received four. Charlie has created a fine 1/35 scale line with his new Tyrannosaurus rex Stegosaurus, Ankylosaurus and Triceratops, plus there are even more to come. 1/35 scale becomes incredibly small when you begin putting tiny details into your sculptures, but it is a good, common scale that many modelers are familiar with. The smaller size also means that models in this scale won't take up so much of your valuable shelf space or empty your wallet quite so fast.

Charlie's T. rex swiftly runs along a rocky base. His Triceratops rears up on its two back legs in defense, ready to stab forward with its deadly, sharp horns. The armored Ankylosaurus takes a tentative step forward on its base and my favorite of the group, the Stegosaurus struts along like a proud peacock.

The detailing and skin formations are overall very good, although some areas are less detailed than others; a couple even have a rushed appearance. The eyes, with their upper lid, give the dinosaurs a commonality with each other; even some character. To me, this makes them exclusively Charlie's, sort of a trademark of his. Anatomically, the dinosaurs look scientifically accurate. The arrangement of armor on Ankylosaurs is still being debated by science and not being an expert myself, I can't say how accurate Charlie's rendition is. The detail of the "scutes" and the boxy head look great, however. His Stegosaurus seems to certainly be well thought out utilizing the latest scientific research and

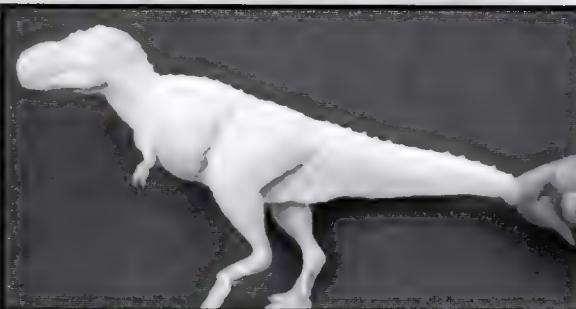
Bruce Bowman's Sinosauropteryx



the same can be said of his fine Triceratops (which, by the way, could probably be brought down on all four legs convincingly on a base of your own creation). Everyone loves Tyrannosaurus rex. Charlie's has a closed mouth and an exceptionally well sculpted head and limbs.

Each kit is beautifully cast (by Mike Evans of Alchemy Works) in only two parts (the animal and the base, with the exception of the T. rex which has a separate tail tip to glue on; unless mine just got broken in the mail) so no assembly or filling with putty is necessary; just pin the animal to its base. The casting seam is mostly on the animal's belly and is very easily removed. A complete set of these fine sculptures nicely painted would make a fantastic display on your shelf. Prices are \$69.98 each for the Triceratops and Ankylo, \$79.98 for the Stego and \$99.98 for the T. rex. More dinosaurs in the series are forthcoming. These and many other fine resin dinosaur kits are available from Triceratops Hills Ranch at 303-741-4712 or on the Internet at: <http://www.linkandpinhobbies.com>

I certainly mean no offense against the kits already reviewed, but do you find that your dinosaur model collection is beginning to get a little 'top heavy' with Tyrannosaurs and Triceratops? Then, what you need is a Sinosauropteryx prima (I'll bet you didn't know you needed that). In 1994, a farmer broke open a piece of rock in the province of Liaoning in northeastern China. He was very surprised to find the complete skeleton of a long-tailed animal about the size of a turkey. What he didn't realize was that



he had discovered the 140 million year old remains of the first feathered dinosaur. As we learned in the film "Jurassic Park" scientists have long suspected a link between birds and dinosaurs. Some even say that dinosaurs never truly became extinct but merely evolved into the birds you see frolicking in your yard each day. Fossils like this seem to further prove this theory.



Sinosauropteryx was a small flesh-eating dinosaur with short powerful arms with long claws used for catching its prey. The most extraordinary feature of this dinosaur is the "protofeathers" seen mostly on its neck, back and tail. Sinosauropteryx had sharp teeth for devouring small prey. The remains of a lizard and a tiny mammal were found still in its stomach. Three Sinosauropteryx have now been found. One had two of its unlaid eggs still attached in the back of its lower cavity.

Bruce Bowman is a highly talented, young sculptor from Portland, Oregon who is fascinated with dinosaurs; especially feathered dinosaurs. His first sculptor came out two years ago and was a representation of a feathered Velociraptor (not proven by science to have existed, YET!) His second, introduced at Mad Model Party 2000 in Pasadena, California is our friend Sinosauropteryx.

Bruce has created a very detailed statue of this amazing prehistoric animal in a dramatic pose deep in a Mesozoic forest. It steps forward, alert, seeking its prey with its long feathered tail sticking far out behind, for balance. It stands atop a branch with moss and mushrooms growing around it. Bruce has completely covered his version of Sinosauropteryx with feathers and carefully gone in to detail every aspect of its form. I guarantee you'll be just as amazed with the beauty of this kit as everyone at the model show was.

Assembly is rather straight forward and an instruction sheet is included. Glue on the animal's two arms, glue on the long tail (best to pin it with a thin piece of metal rod), glue (and pin) the body to the feet that are sculpted to the base and you're ready to paint. Choice of colors and patterns is totally up to you. Get your copy of Sinosauropteryx, the feathered dragon of China at \$100 + \$5 shipping from The Bowman Arts Studio, 5905 SE Ash, Portland, Oregon 97215 (503) 232-2602 bwarts@teleport.com Website: <http://www.teleport.com/~bbow/>



San Antonio, Texas IPMS MODEL SHOW

with Mike & Cindy Morgan

The Live Oak Civic Center, just north of San Antonio, Texas, was the sight of the Alamo Squadron's IPMS model show and convention. It was held on February 26, 2000.

This show has been an annual event since 1977. The current President of Alamo Squadron is Gordon Ziegler. Members of the club total 20 plus.

According to Dick Montgomery, Chief Registrar for this year's show, that first show in 1977 had five vendors and 105 entrants. This February show had 700+ entrants, 130 vendors and close to 1000 spectators for a one-day show. Not bad guys! Entrants came from as far away as Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana and all parts of Texas.

Due to the number of model entries and attendees, the Alamo Squadron relies heavily on the model clubs from Austin, Houston, El Paso and Dallas for volunteers and reinforcements. The Regional IPMS show in July 2001 will be hosted by the Alamo Squadron.

Table after table was filled with all types of aircraft, artillery and automotive models. Additional tables had to be brought in to accommodate the 70+ entries in the figure categories. While talking with Tom Ferris, Head Judge, I learned that the figure categories keep growing by leaps and bounds each year. Plans are in the works to "explode" and expand the figure categories, giving more breakdowns and divisions.

Very special guests known as the American Fighter Aces were in attendance at the show. These gentlemen

San Antonio IPMS...Continued from page 25

were Flying Aces in World War II. It was amazing to see and hear history come to life. They showed the zeal and zest for life that I imagine they had years ago as young pilots.

At each model show we attend, it is very encouraging to see teenagers and even younger people coming into the modeling world. The figures really catch their attention. They may not know what a Messerschmitt is but they know Sailor Moon, the Grinch, Batman and the Mummy.

I had the honor of meeting a young lady, Halley Rechal, age 13 who had entered a model of the Praying Mantis in the Junior category. In our discussion she told me that her uncle had gotten her started in modeling. Even though she had done a few cars in the past, this was her first show. She enjoys various models and is presently learning to use the airbrush. From the looks of her model, she's learning quickly too. Halley received a Third Place

award for her Praying Mantis. She's hooked! I also noticed her mom buying Polar Light's "Bride of Frankenstein" model kit. I asked, "For Halley?" She replied, "No, I may have to do this one myself for next year's show." Another potential victim for model addiction! Seven-year-old Amber of their family received a Modeling Excellence Award for her purple Plymouth Prowler. I really get excited when I see big girls and little girls getting involved in the model world!

First, second and third places were awarded for the various categories. Just as there were tables and tables of models, so was the story of the awards.

Many thanks to the members of Alamo Squadron for taking the time to talk with me and also for sponsoring such a good show. We hope to make it again next year. Happy Modeling!



EXTRA!



FROM THE LAIR OF THE Craftbeast
with **Bill Craft**



KAIJU

this rendering by first applying Bon Artiste Charcoal Antiquing Stain as my base color. The charcoal filled in all the recesses of the bust. I then airbrushed Goldens Transparent Phthalo Green (Blue Shade) over the entire bust. Transparent Phthalo Blue (Green Shade) followed in the recessed areas. A generous drybrushing of white was now in order to bring out all the detail. I finished off the bust by airbrushing Transparent Shading Grey in all the folds of the skin.

I kept the dorsal fins and teeth of the beastie on the resin trees which gave me something to hang on to while I rendered them. The second reason for leaving them attached to the trees is that they are numbered. The parts on the trees correspond to insertion areas on the head and I did

not want to get them mixed up. I'm only a beast after all.

The fins were first given the Charcoal Stain treatment and then airbrushed with Transparent Quinacridone Red. I then airbrushed the tips of each fin with an opaque white.

The "toofys" were painted white and then airbrushed with Transparent Raw Umber at the base.

After all the fins and teeth were rendered, I was ready for the final assembly. One by one, each part was removed from the tree and glued into place on the head.

I rendered the eyes last. A yellow-orange base, followed by a red wash in the corners and ending with a reddish black center iris, got the eyes going. A light misting of white, followed by white highlights in the corners of the iris finished off the eyes nicely.

A coating of Testors semi-gloss over the bust sealed in my colors. The last touch was to apply a gloss coat to the eyes and to the base of each exposed tooth.

This was a very rewarding kit to build and render. I will not say that this bust is 100% accurate, but it is a fine representation of this new era giant Kaiju.

To get your very own "Kaiju," contact:

Artistic License Productions
3537 Seasons Drive Antioch, TN. 37013.
The price of this kit is \$85.00 plus
\$6.00 s&h. or visit their website at:
<http://www.members.home.net/garagekit/index.htm>



BARBARIAN



GARAGE KITS ARE SUCH EASY PREY!

by Jerry Buchanan

"Now they will know why they are afraid of the dark. Now they will learn why they fear the night." - Thulsa Doom

Crom! Every now and then, a kit comes along that makes you remember why you got into the hobby in the first place. A kit that makes you feel young again. Needful Things' Barbarian kit did it for me. This solid, cold-cast porcelain piece is a monster! Sculpted by Mike Mendez, the kit's dynamics are so good, you would swear he is getting ready to spring off of the base! I'll give you a short run through of how I painted mine.

SKIN:

Decision time. Do you go the standard flesh-colored route, or do you paint him like the Conan character's (which this kit reminded me of) berserker body paint he dons about midway through the movie? Once the body paint is on, he is a killing machine with one goal in mind - revenge.

I decided that for my kit, painting the skintones and then smearing white paint on him would look silly because of the scale of this kit. I then decided to go the normal fleshtone route and keep going until the skin was a pasty-white flesh color. Start with Freak Flex Tan Flesh as a basecoat. Airbrush the raised areas with Freak Flex Pale Flesh and keep mixing white into the mixture to lighten the color. Do not overdo it. He will glow in the dark if you make him too white. I actually had to mist some flesh color over the pale skin color because it had become 'too' pale. When you are finished, seal the paint with 2-3 coats of clear coat. For the camo, I sat in front of the TV with my hand on the pause button. I took flat black and penciled in the black areas being careful not to make them too big. If I messed up, I gently scrubbed the black away with a cotton swab and some airbrush thinner. Once the patterns were the way I wanted them, I misted black around some of the areas to soften them. I also misted the pale flesh areas with black to dirty them up. When I was satisfied, I sealed the skin with Testors Clear Satin to give him a sweaty appearance.

CLOTHING/HAIR:

Browns and blacks are the primary colors here. The pants were painted a light brown color with black streaks airbrushed in. The fur area around his midsection, boots, and leather straps were painted flat black. The boots were misted with brown to give them a dusty appearance. The hair was dry-brushed with shades of light brown.

THE BARBARIAN

Nameplate shown above is not included in kit.

BASE:

The stone floor base was basecoated with flat black and drybrushed with shades of gray. The base has a lot of empty space, so I decided to clutter it up a bit. I would have preferred to recreate the entire orgy chamber, but I'm no Bill Craft! I decided to place some weapons on the floor that were dropped either in flight or during battle. The shield was made from Balsa Foam (*Figures 1 - 5*). I printed a design from the computer depicting the shield of a footsoldier. I carefully traced this on the balsa foam and cut out the appropriate shape. Using a ruler and a pointed instrument, I scribed lines that would cause the foam to resemble wooden planks. The shield was sealed with Gesso, painted brown, and given washes of black. The twin snake design was airbrushed in white using my stencil that I printed from the computer. The battle axe was cut from some balsa WOOD. The wood is flimsy, so I strengthened it with some super-thin superglue and kicker. Put a few drops on the wood and let it soak in. Then hit it with the kicker to instantly dry it and you have strengthened wood! The blade was given a rough, pitted look by continuing to place superglue on it and hitting it with the kicker. The chemical reaction that takes place is so intense, it causes the glue to contort and create weird patterns. I strongly advise you to wear eye and hand protection when doing this! The reaction gives off a lot of heat and can burn you if you are not careful. The handle was made from a length of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch dowel rod and the areas where the blade wraps around the handle were created by gluing strips of paper around the dowel rod. The blade was basecoated with black and drybrushed with steel (*Figure 6*).

SWORD:

My one gripe about this kit is the sword. To me, it really detracts from the overall excellence of the piece and looks more like a cricket bat (*Figure 9*). To remedy the situation, I commissioned Gabriel Marquez of Gwin Sculpture Works to sculpt another. Using the original designs as a blueprint, Gabriel delivered a sword that exceeded my expectations! I should have had him sculpt the hilt as well, but you know what they say, hindsight is 20/20. For my scratchbuilt hilt, I cut a $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch section of wooden dowel (the same one I used for the axe) and wrapped that with a fine, green wire





that they use for floral arrangements. Each end was sculpted with Magic Sculp so as to blend in with the cross guard and pommel. I sprayed the blade with Rust-Oleum Chrome and painted the cross guard and pommel with Testors Gold enamel (*Figure 7*). A black glaze was created by mixing Liquitex Acrylic Gel Medium, black paint, and airbrush thinner in a 2:1:1/2 ratio. Smear this on the blade and immediately wipe it off with a damp paper towel. This will pick up the fine detail in the blade (*Figure 8*). The handle was painted tan and given washes of dark browns to give it an aged appearance. The original handle is part of the hand. It had to be cut away. I also had to carefully drill through the hand so that the new sword hilt would go through it.

BLOOD/GORE:

For the blood, I mixed Liquitex Napthol Crimson and a small spot of black ink. I thinned the mixture to a watery consistency with airbrush thinner. Go sparingly with the blood. Not enough is better than too much. If you want it darker, mix in more black and concentrate it in an area. The effect I was going for was to have some dried blood and fresh blood on the figure. I gave the fresh areas a coat of Tamiya Clear Gloss.



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560 Howe Ave.

Shelton, Conn. 06484

Phone (203) 922-1882

Email: dkcarnival@aol.com

For the Atlantean Sword, send \$15.00 (includes shipping in the US) to:

Artistic License Productions

3537 Seasons Drive

Antioch, TN 37013

Internet: <http://www.members.home.net/garagekit/index.htm>



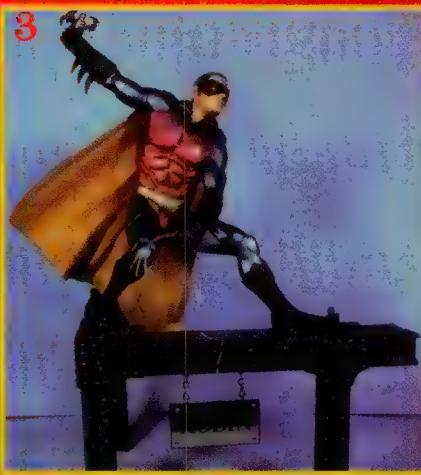


Figure Freak Show of Drammen, Norway

Text and Photos by:

Atle Eriksen

It all started eight years ago, when a small group of people started a club called Car Modelers of Norway (CMON). We have arranged Norwegian Challenge model contest and swap meet for seven years. But after some years, one of those devoted car modelers, namely, myself, got some strong influences from a visit to Stockholm, and the IPMS-OPEN, where several big scale fantasy figure kits were on display.

I was instantly hooked and after I built some figure kits myself and had tried to lure others into the same field, I started, with a couple of friends, a club called "Figure Freaks of Norway." We decided to try to arrange a figure kit show.

By combining Norwegian Challenge and "First Annual Figure

Freak Show" as we called it, we could use all our forces on one goal, thus making it easier to go through with it. One other important factor is that now we can hopefully get figure kit modelers interested in car modeling and the other way around too. And that, my friends, is the ultimate goal; to increase the general interest for this wonderful hobby of ours. I still build car models, but it is great to alternate between two so completely different categories.

The first integrated figure kit show was a hit and it will be repeated in the fall. The date is already set for "Norwegian Challenge VIII" and "Return of the Figure Freak Show", September 16, 2000. Enjoy the accompanying pictures



RENDERING



In this article, we will show how a basic color mixture can be used as the base for several different skin colors. Supposedly, in order to develop these skin color mixtures, Mike just had to "practice" on many female figures, Sure Babe! On with the discussion.

The base flesh tone mixture is made of equal parts of raw sienna, burnt sienna and white. As for paint brands, we normally use Ceramcoat, Liquitex and/or Folk Art. All these are acrylic paints and are easily obtained from craft stores, Wal-Mart and most art supply and hobby shops. They are easily thinned with a 50/50 mix of water and Polly S airbrush thinner for airbrush painting.

Speaking of airbrushes, Mike did all the flesh with the airbrush in order to get a smooth result. Recently he was fortunate enough to receive an Iwata Eclipse Model HP-CS Gravity-feed airbrush and an Iwata Eclipse Model HP-BCS Siphon/Bottom feed airbrush. Mike has used other brands of airbrushes but stated "the Iwatas are like going from a Volkswagen Bug to a Rolls Royce!" They have a smooth action and excellent atomization of paint. With the trigger you can not only control the amount of paint flow but control the airflow as well. The clean-up and maintenance of the Iwata is very easy. We go into this commercial just to make the point, that a good airbrush is just nearly a necessity for painting realistic flesh without the problems of brush strokes. And now back to the program.

To show a light Caucasian skin color,

Mike used Robyn Hood, sculpted by Sam Greenwell now produced by Fatman Productions. Taking the base flesh tone mixture and adding more raw sienna, more white and a few drops of burnt orange produced her base coat.

To show a warm Spanish skin tone, Mike chose Esmerelda by Zotz. Again he took the base flesh tone mixture, decreased the white and added a few drops of terra cotta ().

Let's begin with Esmerelda. After her base coat was airbrushed, Mike took that mixture and added more raw sienna and white. This we will call the second mixture (). Building from dark to light, the third shade was created by adding more raw sienna and white plus a few more drops of terra cotta to the second mixture. This gave Esmerelda her medium flesh tone. For the shading and to bring out the muscle definition, Mike took the second mixture and added a bit of burnt umber and airbrushed it into the appropriate areas.

To blend the shading and definition with the rest of the colors, Mike took the third mixture and lightly misted the entire piece. This helps to reduce the contrast and keeps the color gradation from looking too garish (). For the final highlights, more white was added to the third mixture and then airbrushed onto the highest points of the figure (). A coat of Testor's Dull Cote sealed the flesh on Esmerelda. A word of caution when maintaining a darker skin tone with these mixtures, be careful not to get too crazy



Tales from the Glue Queen
Build-up & Photos by Mike Morgan
Article by Cindy Morgan

FLESH TONES



4



5



6



7



8



9

and add too much raw sienna and white.

Now for Robyn Hood. Her base mixture was airbrushed on all flesh areas. That base mixture became the second mixture by adding more raw sienna and white. This became the medium flesh color and was airbrushed onto the higher points of her skin (). For the final highlights, Mike took the second mixture and added a little more raw sienna and a lot more white. He airbrushed this third mixture onto the highest points. To help maintain the lighter color flesh tone, Mike chose not to go in and do the additional step of using a darker color for shading and muscle definition. DullCote™ sealed her flesh ().

The basic differences between these two skin tones: Maintain Esmerelda's brownish tone by not utilizing as much raw sienna and white while adding terra cotta; Robyn Hood's fair tone utilized more raw sienna and white while adding burnt orange to the base mixture.

And now for something completely different.....As you can see in the photo of Demoness (figure by Steve West and Cellar Cast) (), her skin has a very deep orange look. Mike achieved this by taking the basic base color mix and adding a lot of burnt orange to the mix. He worked from darks to lights making sure he maintained the orange tones throughout the process.

Aries, sculpted by Sam Greenwell, Acornboy Studios, () has more of a warm light to medium African-American skin tone. For her, Mike took the basic flesh mixture and added raw umber to it. Again, working from darks to lights, he maintained the color hue through mixes and gradations.

As her name implies Palida Mors or Pale Lady of Death by Jim Fawkes, () needed a skin tone that was pale and deathly. Mike took the basic flesh mixture and added much more white than would be added for normal healthy skin.

Hopefully, this gives you an idea of how to take a basic flesh mixture and by adding different colors, you can make various skin tones. Be creative. Don't be afraid to venture from the norm. Changing skin coloration can add dramatic effects and a bit more kick to your finished kit. It's okay to play the Mad Scientist and start mixing colors!

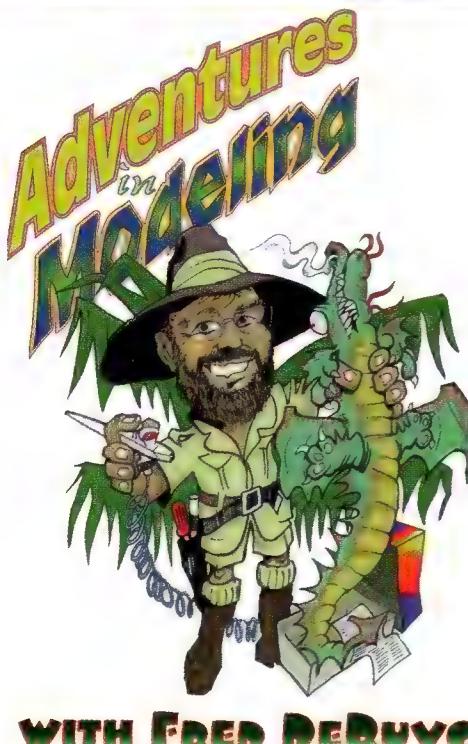
A couple of suggestions when creating mixtures: 1.) Test the colors on white poster board or mat board to see the true hue. 2.) Make notes of your color proportions. You may concoct the perfect color but can't remember which colors or how much of each you used. Then comes the frustration and unfortunately some ugly words when you try to duplicate the color. (We speak from experience on this last suggestion!)

In an upcoming article, we will be showing some other tricks and techniques used in the process of bringing Esmerelda and Robyn Hood to life. As always, if you have any questions or comments, you can contact the Glue Queen or her Glue King at pakrats@earthlink.net. Happy Modeling!!



Photo by Dave Bengel

Can Marty get the Sports Almanac back without Biff seeing?



Welcome to another installment of *Adventures in Modeling!* Hold tight, because we're heading back into the past! My favorite adventure movie ever made is actually a trilogy of movies. Back to the Future (or BTTF), starring Michael J. Fox tops my list of best features (although Lord of the Rings has not hit the theatres yet!). With its whimsical and nostalgic look backward and forward, it provides over three hours of fast-paced entertainment that is unbeatable. This is one of the few movies that shows the future in fairly glowing terms. This particular series of movies is pure fun and like most of us, I can personally relate to many aspects of the different time periods.

Probably the fact that the BTTF series of movies strikes a chord within me is what prompted me to create a diorama loosely based on it. I say "loosely based" because the diorama I've created for this article did not actually occur in any of the three episodes, however, it wouldn't be too difficult for me to believe that it easily could have taken place. You'll remember how Michael J. Fox as Marty McFly had allowed greed to overcome his sense of better judgment in part two of the trilogy by purchasing a copy of Gray's Sports Almanac (that would, of course, make him rich) and because of it, an entire series of negative events began to occur. If he and Doc (played enthusiastically by Christopher Lloyd) failed to right all the wrongs, time would reverse itself until eventually Marty and his entire family would have been completely different. It's almost like entering an episode of Superman in Bizarro world. As Marty would say, "Heavy!"



Bags of parts! One wall down; three to go! Four eaves and more walls. Got patience?

The Plot Thickens

In my mind, I created a scene that I believed could have been incorporated into the movie very easily. For those who have seen the movies, specifically the second in the series, you'll remember when Marty hitches a ride to Biff's house as he attempts to regain possession of the almanac and winds up getting locked inside the garage. Essentially the entire movie follows Marty's and Doc's adventures in attempting to retrieve this important publication. This particular scene is pivotal for the entire movie because it is where the older Biff (having "borrowed" the DeLorean from Doc after retrieving the almanac from the garbage can in the future), flies back in time to meet up with himself as a young Biff. Here, he passes himself off as a "distant relative" and gives him the almanac and persuades him to begin a life of gambling. This will ensure that Biff's fortune will be made and the older Biff will then live on Easy Street. Marty's job, of course, is to keep that from happening.

For my diorama, that I would recreate the garage and many of the aspects of it, but in my scenario, Doc is hovering above Biff's garage in the DeLorean, while Marty is on the ground below, just around the corner to the garage entrance, waiting for the opportune moment to get the almanac back from Biff. Biff, preoccupied working underneath his car while the almanac is carelessly tossed aside on the driveway, doesn't notice Marty's presence.

As I've said it on numerous occasions, I like my models to

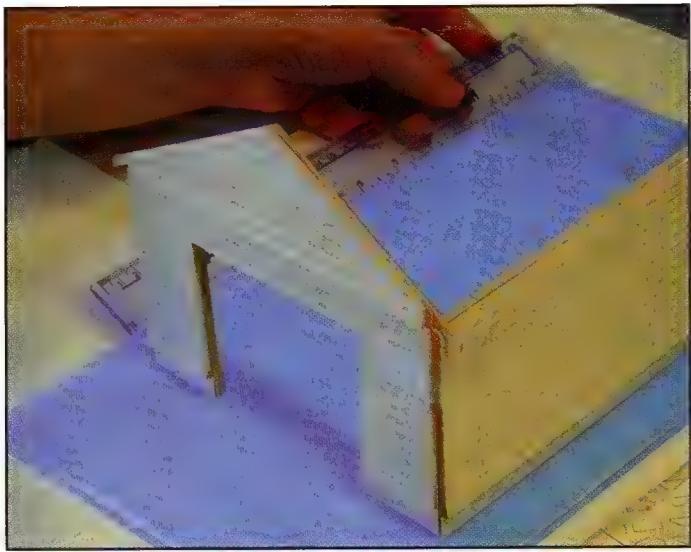
Below left: Another wall takes shape. Below right: The garage is nearing completion and the siding is attached. You can see the beginnings of the base here as well as the placement of the cars, compared to the garage. Positioning is extremely important in the overall scheme of the diorama.

tell stories. It doesn't matter whether it's a figure kit or a space ship or something out of a Sci-Fi drama. It's difficult for me to simply build a model and stick it on the shelf without some type of accompanying base. It needs to have a setting to complete it. I realized in this case, there would be a great deal to this particular scene, but to me, it was worth it. But, where to start? Well, most of the diorama would be taken up with the actual garage/base/scene itself, so I might as well start there. The rest of the model, including the two cars and the three figures really wouldn't take that much time compared to the base. Actually, next to the base, it was the DeLorean that took the most amount of time because of all the detailing and intricacy associated with it.

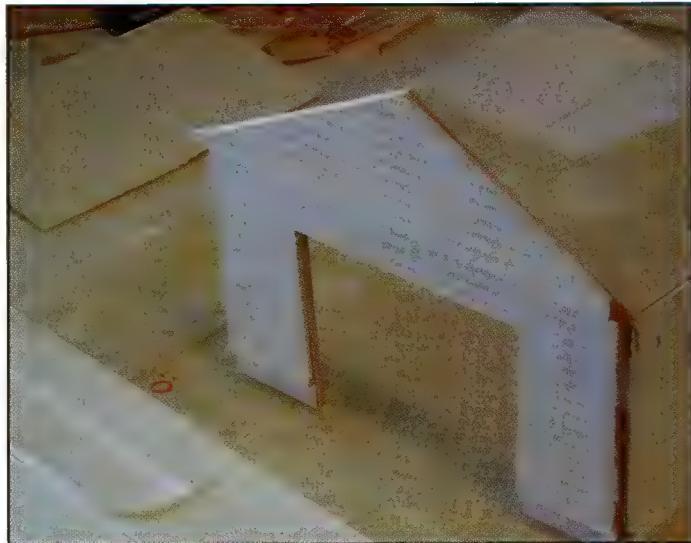
Picking Up the Pieces

While at the 1999 IPMS National Convention as vendors, we met a number of folks in this industry who have been plugging away creating after-market items for modelers like you and me. One of those folks was Ric from **Scale Equipment, Ltd.** out of Bradenton, FL. Right away, I was very impressed with the quality of the products his company produced mainly in 1/24th scale; everything from tools to snowmobiles to structures and tons more. We got to talking over the course of the four-day event and I became interested in their **Shade Tree Mechanic's Garage**. This structure would fit perfectly within the diorama that I was intent on creating. I had been considering this particular BTTF diorama for quite some time prior to





Above: Measuring to find out how big the actual base needs to be.



The plexiglass, sidewalk and driveway parts are glued to the Styrofoam base.



The base is given a coating of primer gray. The 1948 Ford is placed in the garage for looks.

the 'Nats, but didn't have all the components yet. This Garage would serve as the focal point.

By the time we returned home from Florida, I had the Garage and I had also picked up the AMT/Ertl BTTF DeLorean at the show. The only additional item remaining was the 1948 Ford. As fortune would have it, late in 1999, Revell-Monogram re-released the kit.

I should also point out that Ric at Scale Equipment, Ltd., carries a full line of products including many 1/24th scale figures from Jimmy Flintstone. One of the figures closely resembles Doc's character, so I didn't have to convert anything. For the other two figures, Marty and Biff, I chose the Tamiya Mechanics figures set.

So, You Feel Like Building a Real Building?

When I finally began building this scene, I soon discovered that Ric does his homework! In fact, in every way, this garage was like building the full scale structure, except, of course, in 1/24th scale miniature! There was a multiple-paged instruction booklet, blueprints for each phase of the building process and templates for things like shingles for the roof! It seemed overwhelming, but I began whittling away at it. I quickly decided that I would cut a few corners and not perform all the steps necessary in completing the garage. For instance, I chose to create only four sets of rafters/peaks for the roof instead of the 16 recommended. I also left out a few of other supports here and there, but overall, this garage went together pretty much as the instructions dictated. This truly is an architectural model and I'm very proud of the work that went into it. While it's not perfect, it suits me and creates a nice centerpiece.

The Shade Tree Mechanic's Garage kit comes with nearly everything you need to create your garage, with the exception of actual shingles, although a template is included. There are even instructions for creating a 1/24th scale doghouse!

The World is Flat

After constructing most of the garage, I was able to determine the actual size of the base. I didn't want something gargantuan because I don't have the room for it. I wanted something that would hold the entire scene without looking obnoxiously large or, conversely, too tight, so I scaled the actual base to be about three to four inches larger than the garage on one side and about an inch and a half larger on the other side. The front of the base needed to extend past the front of the garage by about five to six inches so that it would avoid looking as if the front of the garage was right on the street. Now remember, I'm not going for an exact replica of Biff's garage with the house next door and the picket fence, etc. I only wanted this scene to be reminiscent of the movie garage. Because of the specific vehicles utilized for this diorama, folks would know what the scene was depicting.

The base was created with a piece of flat Styrofoam™ and on top of that was glued a slightly smaller piece of clear plexiglass (for stability) and then the parts for the sidewalk, driveway and road (these latter three segments were included in the garage kit). I used Liquid Nails™ to glue everything down.

As an aside, I have to say that I was very impressed with the quality of parts included in the garage kit. The sidewalk, curbs and street were all excellently detailed and perfectly in scale with the rest of the diorama that I was creating.

To me, one of the most important things to deal with effectively is where all the "players" or parts will go in the scene. You'll

note in the one photo, I have the DeLorean's body hoisted up in the air, slightly over the front of the garage. My idea here is that Doc is hovering just out of Biff's range of vision (because he's under the car working away), but Doc can see Marty and the entire scene. It's one of those "hold your breath" kind of scenes because time is of the essence, and of course, it's very important that Marty is not seen by Biff. Marty has seen the almanac and simply waits for the best time to run up quietly and quickly snag it. Then, as quickly as possible, get back to the DeLorean and hightail it out of there to 1985 where Doc can then destroy his "infernal" time machine which has caused "nothing but problems!"

The Spares

The garage kit comes with a tree, which I didn't use for two reasons: 1. I didn't particularly like the shape of it and 2. It was two halves of resin, split up the middle. The tree would have to be glued together, puttied, sanded, then painted. In the end, I went to a local train hobby shop and bought a tree that was beautifully made and decorated (produced by Charlie's Okey-Dokey Oaks, in Merced, CA, 209.723.3405). For you figure kit folks who rarely venture into a train hobby shop, you may want to find one and go in when you have some extra time. This particular train shop in my area (Bruce's Train Shop) has a *ton* of model-related goodies. They probably have the best Woodland Scenics' product section that I have ever seen in any shop that I have ever been in and they have many items that can be utilized in dioramas of this size. Beyond this, they have paints, glues, brushes and many, many tools for every situation that may arise. I have Dave Bengel to thank for introducing me to this shop as well as Riverside Hobbies here in the Sacramento area. Between these two shops, I can get almost everything I need.

I went to Bruce's Train Shop specifically for a tree because I had seen them on another occasion when I had gone on a quest for other items months before. Filing the information away in my brain, I knew that I would have need of it in the future. The tree was perfect for this particular diorama and the price was just over \$18.00. So, since I knew it was going to save me a good amount of time trying to render the tree that came with the garage kit, I bought it thankfully.

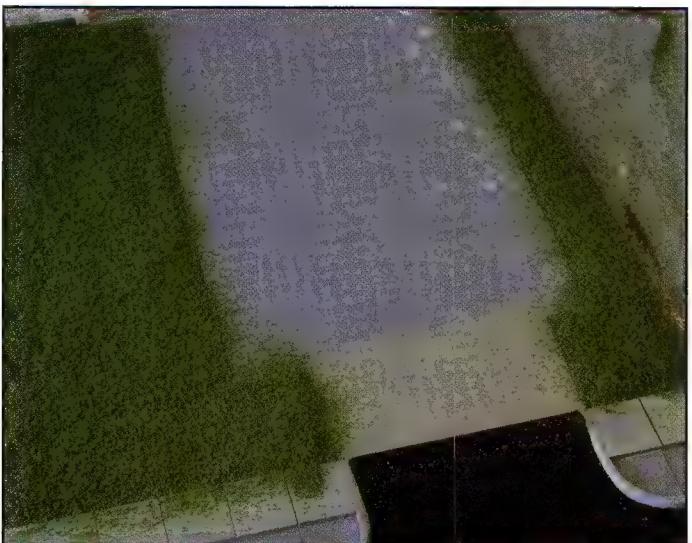
At this same shop, I found a package of ribbed aluminum strips which I decided to use to make an old-fashioned garbage can (you remember those metal ones with the metal handles on the side, long before recycling became the norm). I also purchased a package of three small wooden 50 gallon cans. Painted up and weathered, they would look just like their metal counterparts. More glue, a few more tools and roughly \$45.00 later, I was out of there and ready to complete more of my diorama.

Better Homes & Lawn

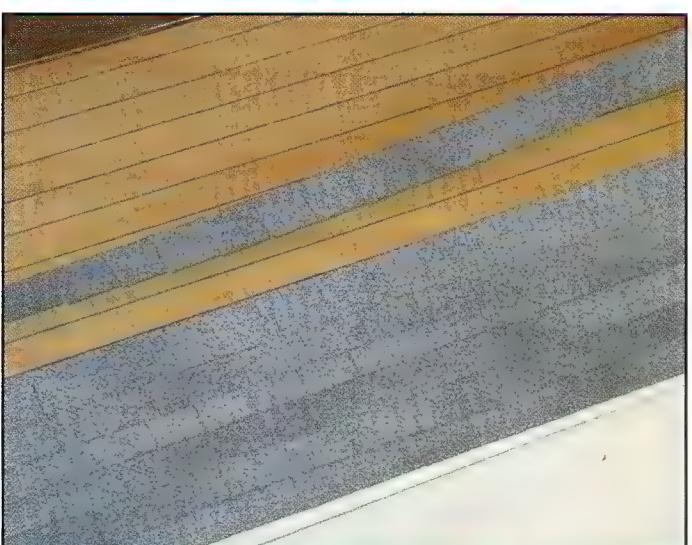
I wasn't quite sure how I wanted to create the grass itself. I had done the Ms. Rogers diorama which included grass or ground cover, but I didn't want to replicate that entire process for this. I wanted to try something different so I simply opted to paint the grass areas of the base green as an undercoat. When that dried, I then used the spray glue from Woodland Scenics and sprinkled the Green Turf Blend over that. Once again, the spray glue was used to firmly cement everything into place. Any spots that were missed or determined to be too thin, were fixed individually with Elmer's™ white glue (watered down) for more exact placement.



The grass area on the base is prepainted green. Note some of the various parts used in this dio.



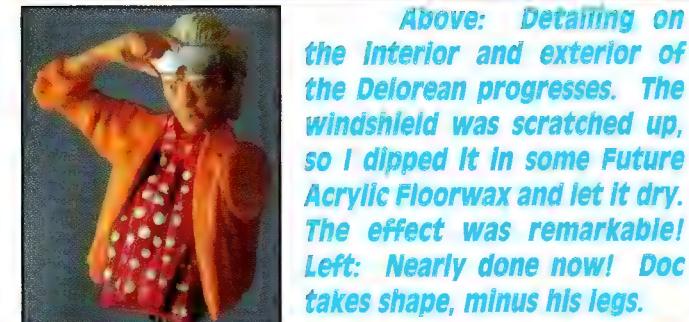
Green Turf Blend from Woodland Scenics makes great, realistic looking grass in this scale!



Lines were drawn at intervals across the surface of the roof to guard against unevenness.



Left: The bare oil cans and the decals. Right: The finished oil cans ready for the garbage can.



Above: Detailing on the Interior and exterior of the Delorean progresses. The windshield was scratched up, so I dipped It in some Future Acrylic Floorwax and let it dry. The effect was remarkable! Left: Nearly done now! Doc takes shape, minus his legs.

The areas between the sidewalk and the roadway were filled with Hydrocal and then the same Green Turf Blend was sprinkled over these areas to replicate the lawn. I took a street lamp from one of Revell-Monogram's new vehicular model display cases (Street Scene) and embedded that into the curb area just to the right of the garage since it was the same scale.

The \$18.00 tree was "planted" into the lawn by drilling a small hole and gluing it into place with CA glue and kicker. The scene was beginning to take shape!

The Roof, the Roof, the Roof is on Fire!

The garage kit included planking that was to be used to create the actual roof. On top of this, rows of shingles would be attached. Setting the shingles template aside, I chose an easier path, by simply marking lines across the roof at equal intervals, then cutting out equal width strips from sandpaper. I then cut into the shingle strip at roughly every half inch. When the strips were glued onto the roof and overlaid slightly on top of each other as would apply on a real roof, the effect was very realistic. The sandpaper I used was light gray in color, with a medium coarseness. Prior to cutting up the strips into usable shingles, black was lightly misted over the entire sheet in an irregular pattern to break up the color. The strips were adhered using CA glue and kicker. Individual shingles were cut and applied in those areas where a strip might not quite have reached the edge of the roof.

Garbage In; Garbage Out

MRC produces a 1/25th scale commercial garage, just like the kind that still exists to some degree in the south and on the east coast and were the norm when I was growing up. You can purchase the Texaco® version or the more generic "Joe's Power Plus" version. I chose the latter, since it's a bit cheaper (due to not having to pay royalties to Texaco for using the name). It's got some great items like 1/25th scale oil cans, complete with water slide decals, car jacks, air compressors and everything else you'd find at a real gas station.

Having created a fairly realistic looking metal garbage can, I wanted to put some garbage in it, so I thought that placing items like these oil cans, scraps of paper and tiny bits of wood would be just what I needed. Biff, having just changed and added new oil, was busy doing some last minute checking to make sure that the oil plug in the oil pan was nice and tight. Marty had better hurry if he wanted to retrieve the Sports Almanac and get out of there!

The 50 gallon oil drum was painted with Testors Gun Metal, out of the spray can, then Badger's Freak Flex Mummified Brown was brushed on and wiped and blotted off, creating the illusion of rusty metal. These two items done, Marty had a perfect place to hide while he waited for the right time to get the almanac.

Other odds and ends - car jacks, wrenches, car jack stands - were utilized from the tools created by Scale Equipment, Ltd and also from the Joe's Power Plus kit. I also decided to grab some extra tires and car parts from some other Revell-Monogram car kits I had laying around just to give Biff's garage more of a gearhead atmosphere. I didn't want to overdo it, but some items were needed or it would just look empty.

Found on the Road Dead:

I'm not going to spend too much time on the vehicles. The 1948 Ford went together easily, though it was complex. It was actually kind of fun putting this car together, since it had been

The Source!

- Scale Equipment, Ltd. @ www.scalelt.net •
- Woodland Scenics: www.woodlandscenics.com •
- Revell-Monogram: www.revell-monogram.com •
- Tamiya: www.tamiya.com •

quite a few years since I'd done a car straight out of the box. What I made sure that I *did* do, as well as I could, was to create a nice, shiny finish for Biff's car because, according to the movie, he really prided himself on having a great looking car (when he wasn't going head-to-head with manure!).

Delirious for Doc's DeLorean:

Ever since I saw it in the first movie, I thought that it was just cool. The fact that it portrays a time machine is even cooler. I'm sure we all know what we would do and where in time we would go if we could ever get our hands on a time machine that actually worked. For me, of course, a quick trip to the bank and then back to the hobby shops of the 60s to purchase as many original Aurora kits as I could possibly get would be my goal.

I chose Testors Aluminum (out of the spray can) to create the stainless steel finish for the DeLorean. While this was drying, I turned my sights to the interior and the other parts of the exterior (Mr. Fusion, etc.) and there is a quite a bit to contend with. If you've built this car, you can attest to this. There are many tiny items that need careful attention, like the alarm clock on the dashboard or the wires running throughout. These small items require you to hold your breath when you're brushing paint on and you'll also need to wear glasses that allow you to see closeup.

There are two ways you can choose to leave the tires on the DeLorean; either upright for driving on the road, or turned upward as in flight. Since the car was going to be hovering slightly above the tree and roof of the garage, I opted for this version. I had even toyed with the idea of getting some tiny lights going inside the body near the wheel wells so that the

car could glow, but I think I ran out of gas on that one.

Places Everyone!

It was now time for the figures. Jimmy Flintstone's Doc figure was repositioned so that he could sit in the DeLorean. Marty and Biff were created from the Tamiya Mechanics' set and very little modifications were done on them since they were already in the positions that I wanted them to be in. I studied some of the movie again to get the colors of the clothing on all three guys as close as possible.

Down the Homestretch

Well, it was getting close now. The only thing I had left to do was to create something that looked like the Sports Almanac that was in the movie. So, I opened up one of my imaging software programs and created something that resembled what I was after. I then sized it and printed it out, added some interior pages to it and dropped in on the driveway not too far from Biff.

After All is Said and Done

I didn't really keep track, but I probably spent about 30 to 40 hours on this diorama. I know that I spent well over 10 hours just on the garage and base; probably closer to 15 on that part. I have never completed anything this ambitious and I'm very happy with the results.

I hope you've enjoyed this excursion back in time! Like I've said before, modeling should be an adventure. Special thanks to Dave Bengel for the main photo and for helping me with the last minute details to complete this diorama as my deadline approached! See you next time, folks!



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Head shot of S. Collora by Dennis Williams

SANDY COLLORA: Art & Passion

With Jim Bertges

Sandy Collora is an artist. That is simultaneously a simplistic and quite complex explanation of who Sandy is and what he does. Simply put, the term artist creates a certain mental picture, but when you apply the term to someone like Sandy Collora, it takes on a much deeper meaning. Sandy is a sculptor, painter, production designer, concept illustrator and storyboard artist. Not to mention, the writer and director of his own film. He has also developed stories with creatures of his own design that will one day entertain people all over the world. If you think about it, that makes Sandy Collora quite the artist indeed. I recently had the rare opportunity to interview the 31 year old artist from his quaint beach cottage in sunny Southern California. Listening to him, his enthusiasm and opinions become contagious, as you will soon discover.

Chances are that even if you don't recognize Sandy's name, you've been exposed to his work in one way or another. You've either seen it on movie screen or in a store, or you own a piece and don't even know it. After a brief look at what Sandy has had a hand in, you'll realize that you're more familiar with his work than you thought. For motion pictures, he's done design work and sculpting on *The Abyss*, *Jurassic Park*, *Men in Black*, *Total Recall*, *Dogma* and many others including the design of the aliens for *The Arrival*. He has designed rides and characters for theme parks around the world. His sculpting includes resin kits of the Space Jockey from *Alien*, a Gene Simmons bust, a Predator bust and an HR Pufnstuff figure to mention a few. He has created super hero

action figures for Toy Biz and Star Wars toys for Hasbro. He was the sculptor on some of the popular Toy Biz Marvel Super hero plastic kits including The Hulk, The Silver Surfer, Venom, Ghost Rider, Spiderman and the ultra dynamic Capt. America vs the Red Skull. "The Toy Biz kits were a great gig, we cranked all those out in like 3 weeks." He also recently sculpted a series of 12-inch dolls based on the comic book characters Chastity, Fairchild, Burnout and Rainmaker. With any luck we may soon see a line of resin kits based on Sandy's well-known, beautiful Sea Creature designs.

In addition to all the designing and sculpting he has done, Sandy recently wrote and directed a short film entitled Solomon Bernstein's Bathroom. He describes the fantasy short as an emotionally heavy story; "It's about a frustrated artist who finds this creature that is a physical manifestation of his guilt over something that happened to him as a child. It lives in his bathroom and takes him on an adventure back to the past to redeem himself of his guilt. It stars Troy Garity (Jane Fonda's son) and Kathy Kristoferson from *Guyver 2: Dark Hero*. The creature is played by Todd Tucker, the shop supervisor at Greg Cannom's. He helped build the suit and gives a great performance as the creature."

It's only fitting that Sandy's career is taking a turn into film making since he cites the films of Steven Spielberg and George Lucas as his earliest inspirations. As a kid, he recalls enjoying comic books and playing Dungeons and Dragons, but what really struck him as inspiration for what he wanted to do with his life were films like *Jaws*, *ET*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and the *Star Wars* trilogy. "I think there was a filmmaker inside me who was more interested in coming up with stories and making films. I thought that I could use my artistic abilities to get my foot in the door to be able to do that... Yeah, it was a bumpy road, but it's worked out well."

Sandy's career as a paid artist started at an early age with a trend that was popular where he grew up. "When I was 11 or 12 years old it was popular where I lived in NY to have your favorite record album painted on the back of your denim jacket. So I was painting Iron Maiden and Asia record covers on the backs of my friends jackets for \$45 or \$50 a pop and when you're that age, that's a lot of money."

Not long after, Sandy found himself being paid as a "real" professional artist. "I consider myself very lucky in that at a very early age I knew exactly what I wanted to do with my life. I started professionally in the industry when I was very young. I started in comics when I was fourteen years old. I did some 'fill-ins' which were kind of pin-up pages of various characters and I did some comps for covers. It was a great experience. A little later I did a lot of illustrations for Dungeons and Dragons type role-playing books. I designed a bunch of characters and monsters and stuff. It was right up my alley."

Sandy always had the support of his parents in his artistic endeavors. They provided him with the materials he needed and encouraged him. However, he insists they didn't have to encourage him too much as he was constantly drawing. There was no formal art training early on for Sandy, the talent and desire to draw and create always seemed to be inside him. "I had no formal training whatsoever, I was totally self-taught at that point. When I came out here and met people like Henry Alvarez and started working at Stan Winston's and other places, I became exposed to people like Steve Wang and Jose Fernandez who were very influential that I learned from. That makes your talent grow. But from the beginning it was innate, no one ever sat me down and said this is what you do, this is how you draw. I would just draw things. I'd look at bugs and snakes and fish and I would just draw them, that's how I learned about form, light and shadow. I just flopped a mackerel down on the table and looked at it, where the highlights hit and where the shadows fell. Through the natural progression of just doing it, I learned."

Discovering new facets of his talent is a process that contin-

ues for Sandy, "You're always learning, there are so many talented people in this industry that I've had the good fortune to work with and learn from. I still get inspired by other people's work."

It was when Sandy traveled west in his quest to get into the film business that he met one of his greatest influences and sculpting mentors, effects designer and master sculptor Henry Alvarez. "When I met Henry Alvarez, I went from somebody who had a very limited knowledge of form and sculpting reality, to getting personally tutored by the best in the business. After a few years of working with Henry, my stuff improved light years. Back when I was eighteen or nineteen I felt I had a decent handle on designing creatures and characters and I knew how to use colored pencils and paint, but I always felt my sculpture work was a little weak. Of course, Henry was not at a loss for words in pointing that out to me. I told him, 'I want to learn how to sculpt better. I want to learn about form and how to make things look real.' Henry was nice enough and saw enough talent there, that he took me under his wing and really taught me sculpture. We've developed an incredible friendship, I've known him for more than ten years, it has really been an incredible gift. Seeing something like that come full circle is very rewarding, having someone like Henry look at my work, and acknowledge the growth.

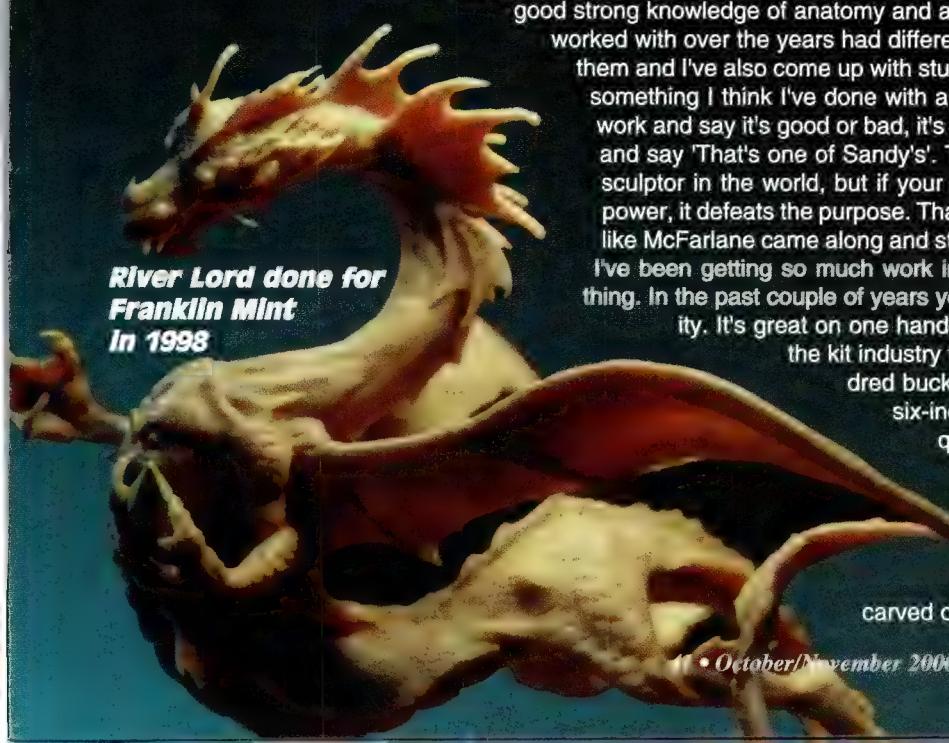
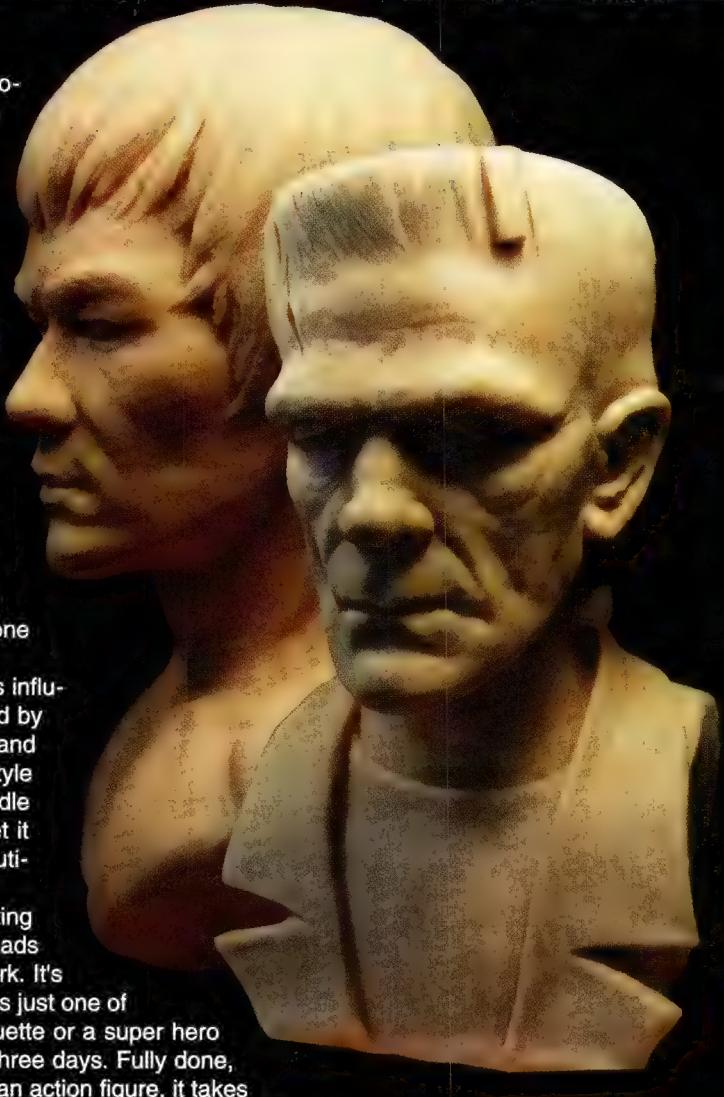
Other people in the industry can look at my work and see Henry's influence, which to me is great because I love to say, 'Yeah, I was trained by Henry Alvarez.' You can see similarities especially in likeness work and bronzes between Henry and myself. Henry definitely has his own style and our work looks different enough, but you can look at ways I handle certain forms and tooling textures...that I learned from Henry, that set it apart from other guys. Some call it 'rough', but Henry and I call it beautiful, ya know, grass-roots sculpture."

Over the years Sandy has developed a proficiency in his sculpting that has made his talents sought after by many different clients. That leads to a great volume of work. "Flat out...I do an incredible amount of work. It's just what I do. I carry a sketchbook with me wherever I go. Being fast is just one of those things that comes with just doing it. As far as sculpting a maquette or a super hero type action figure or a character design, I can do a piece like that in three days. Fully done, detailed with a costume sculpted on it, the whole nine yards. If it's for an action figure, it takes a little longer because I have to use other guys to do waxes and put the joints in, I don't have the patience for that, I'm more into the gesture, the feel...the moment, that's more me. I'm all about capturing a moment."

However, doing work for so many commercial concerns requires Sandy to curb his more artistic flourishes in order to deliver what the client needs. "It's about being flexible and being able to do different kinds of things. When the toy companies come to me, I have to find that incredibly fine line between giving them what they want and incorporating my own style."

Of course, even in the most commercial aspects of his work, Sandy's talent and style show through. There's more than just speed and skill involved in delivering for a client's needs, an artist still needs to call on all his talents. "It's a good strong knowledge of anatomy and an overall knowledge of the process. The sculptors I've worked with over the years had different ways of doing things and I've picked up things from them and I've also come up with stuff myself. I think it's important to develop a style. That's something I think I've done with a great deal of success, whether or not you look at my work and say it's good or bad, it's always Me. People can look at it from across the room and say 'That's one of Sandy's'. That's cool. You can be the most technically proficient sculptor in the world, but if your stuff is boring and it has no life to it...no energy...no power, it defeats the purpose. That's what killed the toy industry for a long time until guys like McFarlane came along and started doing such interesting, dynamic stuff. That's why I've been getting so much work in the toy industry, my style lends itself to that sort of thing. In the past couple of years you're beginning to see action figures of model kit quality. It's great on one hand, but on the other hand it's taking business away from the kit industry which kind of stinks. Why would somebody pay a hundred bucks for this really killer resin kit when they can go buy a six-inch action figure of it for \$6.99? It's good to see the quality of things improving though. I have to give Todd a lot of credit, because if you look at it, he really revolutionized the whole industry. It seemed for the longest time I was banging my head against the wall with the toy companies saying 'Hey, why do all these action figures have to look like they're carved out of soap and so stiff?' It was always technical things

**River Lord done for Franklin Mint
In 1998**



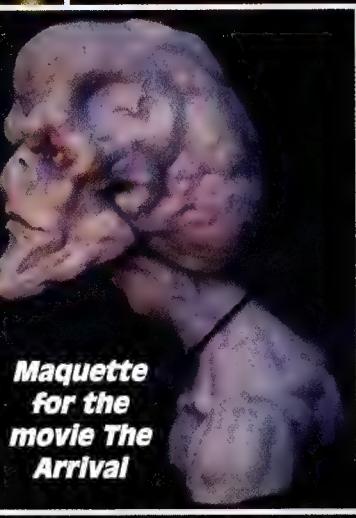
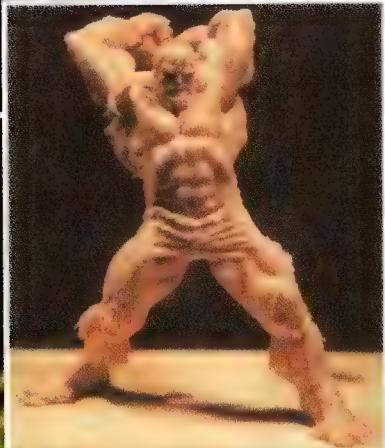


Slug Lord

Right: The Incredible Hulk for Toy Biz



Above: Groeg, the Storyteller, from a project Sandy created and wrote called The Salamander Stories.



Maquette for the movie The Arrival



Gully the Wizard also from The Salamander Stories

Photo by Dennis Williams

or the molding and tooling would cost too much and you'd get a song and dance. It took a guy like Todd who had the balls to actually go out and start producing this stuff. I don't know what his tooling costs are, but regardless of the costs, he deserves a lot of respect for bringing the industry up to this level."

When it comes to a discussion of the toy and model kit industry, Sandy is a man of strong opinions and he expresses them freely. "I have very mixed feelings at this point about the toy industry and where it's going, the model kit industry as well. The toy companies right now are basically killing everybody, they're releasing so much stuff, that it's hard for a collector or even kids to keep up with it all. When there's so much product out there, it cuts down on the uniqueness of one piece. When I started doing model kits in the late 80s, there weren't a lot of resin kits out there, but the stuff that was getting done at the time was great. I remember getting Steve Wang's Gillman and that was like...WOW! Things like that pushed me to achieve that level of talent and detail. But now the market is flooded, there's no other way to put it, there's just too much shit out there. To a degree it's lost some of its charm. The resin kit industry has lost its whole underground, garage kit feel, and quite frankly, I think it's been overrun by the toy industry, which I think is on a path to destruction. The collector-based fan who is buying this stuff is nothing percentage-wise when compared to the kids. You've got to get the kids. I think toys have strayed way too far from a playability standpoint. It's sad to see kids or young adults in a toy store buying toys that they'll never open and never play with. When you ask them why they're buying it they say, 'It will be worth money some day'. It really is my obligation to say these things because that kind of mentality is really killing the industry. Toys should be for kids! There's a fine line between what's collectible and what's a toy, but you have mostly adults buying these toys simply because they think they'll be worth money. What they don't understand is that the Star Wars stuff from

the seventies is worth so much money today because back then everybody bought those toys and played the hell out of them! That's why they're worth so much when you find them in the packages today. There is a very limited supply. What really kills me is seeing grown men in the toy stores, pushing kids aside, buying tons of these new Star Wars and other action figures and taking them to comic book shows on the weekends and bumping up the price. Stuff like that is killing the industry and, quite frankly, makes me ill. Those people are taking our industry down the wrong path. It's great that McFarlane and some of these other guys are improving the sculpting and painting of these figures and making them more appealing to adults, but it just seems that it's been taken away from the kids."

Sandy finds a big difference between nostalgia collecting and speculating, and he sees a disturbing trend among today's kids as well as adult collectors. "When I was a kid and Star Wars came out and I got those figures, I didn't care that it didn't look exactly like Mark Hamill or Harrison Ford, it was what it represented. It was Luke Skywalker from the movie. I could buy the toy, take it home, put it in the land speeder and run around my house and that's what made it cool. It's really funny nowadays, to go to someone's home who has nine- or ten-year old kids and see these action figures pinned to the wall still in the packages. If that's not defeating the purpose, I don't know what is. I find it personally disturbing."

However, he can also relate to the collector's mentality, but on a much more personal level. "I'm the last one to talk badly about the collectible industry, because I personally have a large collection of Star Wars and Steven Spielberg memorabilia. But I collect it not because of its market value, but because it's nostalgic to me. A lot of this stuff I bought when I was a kid. I was lucky enough to travel a lot when I was a child. My mom worked at a travel agency and every country I went to I bought action figures, posters and books and now I have a very impressive collection of the stuff. And to tell you the truth, the monetary value of the stuff means absolutely nothing to me. I look around my house at the Spielberg posters and the Star Wars stuff and it reminds me of my childhood and how those films, filmmakers and the artists who worked on those films influenced my life. I hate to sound like a geek, but when I was in high school and other kids were out partying, drinking and acting stupid, I was home drawing and sculpting. That's what I did and that's what enabled me to get work in the industry when I got out here at seventeen or eighteen years old; I had a full portfolio of stuff to show. It was good enough for someone like Stan Winston to say, 'Look at what this kid can do at seventeen; let's get him in here to work on this show'. That led to working with Rick Baker and Rob Bottin. It was inspiring to work there. It was great being exposed to all that stuff and I think that's what enabled my talent to grow and



Ukko the Dwarf from *Slaine*, designed by Simon Bisley, sculpted by Sandy.



Wrath, a character from *Dr. Demon* (Landmark Entertainment)

for me to get where I am now."

As an artist who has worked in the commercial arena, the question arises about the difference between the work of fantasy artists and sculptors and that of others that is given the title of "Fine Art". "Art to me has always been a very broad word, a very ambiguous word and a very misused word. Growing up in New York I was exposed to a lot of the East Village, Soho kind of art movement of the late 80s. Do I think that stuff is art? I don't know. Are those guys talented? I don't think so. Splattering paint on a canvas and spreading it around with a tennis ball and lighting it on fire, I personally have no appreciation for that kind of stuff. Guys who can draw things from life or from their head, that's talent.

Guys who do good portraiture or good animals or can design good creatures, that's somebody who's talented. As far as Fine Art goes, it's more up to the public to discern what's Fine Art and what's not. There's stuff that I've bought at a toy store, stuff by McFarlane and some of the really talented guys out there or stuff like Steve Wang's Gillman or his Guyver (I'd love to cast those up in bronze!) that's Fine Art. Break the word down, fine...art. Is it art, I guess. Is it fine? I can answer the fine question with a little more reality to it than I can the art question because I can look at it and tell you if it's good or not. Art? It's a very ambiguous word. It's what people use for a label. Oh, it's commercial, it's this, it's that. To me it's all crap. It is what it is. Different types of art have different uses and different things that they do in our industry. It all depends upon the quality of the work. There was stuff at the last Mad Model Party that I thought was incredible. I've got to be honest too, and say a lot of it was crap."

To Sandy, personal opinion is much more important than any kind of classification by critics or would be connoisseurs. It's a case where an old saying comes to mind, "I don't know much about art, but I know what I like." But in this case, the man really knows about art. "It's all personal opinion. It's what people will classify as art or not art. It's relative. There are very wealthy people in the world who will spend huge amounts of money on something I think looks like crap. They hang it on their wall as a prized collector piece and I just don't get it. But then, it's not for me to judge. Would I hang it on my wall? Certainly not. I'd rather have one of Dominic Alvarez's charcoal drawings up on my wall. Do I care about Picasso and all the Cubists and all that? No. I have that attitude about Fine Art because I never dug that stuff. Never as a kid was I looking at Manet and Monet or Degas or Picasso or Van Gogh or the French Impressionists. It never appealed to me. But Jim Steranko, Neal Adams, Frank Frazetta, Ralph McQuarrie...those are the guys I looked up to. Joe Johnston, Syd Mead...that was the stuff I liked. Maybe it's just a sign of the times or the generation I grew up in. As far as what artists I'm into now...Simon Bisley is insane, Brom, Joe Soren, Ian McCaig, Johnston is still a god, it's great he's



*Character from a screenplay by Sandy, titled *The Discovery*.*

moved into directing; what an immense talent. Sculpturally, Henry will always be my hero... But Steve Wang is huge, the McFarlane stuff, what's that guy's name? Comboy? Eric Treadaway... The Shiflets, Jose Fernandez, Clete Maffet, Digger..."

When it comes to his own art, Sandy draws a very important distinction between the work he does for hire and the work he creates for his own satisfaction. "One of the great things about being fast is that it gives you time to do your own things. I think that is of the utmost importance. The most important thing that can be said about sculpting and sculptors and artists is that you have to have your own work that's personal to you. You cannot make that work commercial, or work you do for other people. There are a number of reasons, the stuff goes overseas and is bastardized by the production facilities. That's a problem that I've run into with people I've hired. They don't want to work on my armature or they don't want me going over a sculpt they've worked on. I have to get through to them, 'This is not your work, this is not my work. It belongs to Hasbro or whoever has hired me to do it.' If I feel you're not good at doing feet I'll give the sculpture to somebody who does better feet. I don't want to hear anything out of you.' Back when I was working with Stan Winston or Steve Johnson, my portfolio never had any of the work I did for them in it. I had nothing from the *Abyss* or *Total Recall* in my book because other people worked on the stuff too. I would come home from work at 7 o'clock and I'd sculpt until three in the morning or I'd paint. I had my own work that was personal to me so that nobody could look into my portfolio and say, 'Oh, I worked on that! No, it's my work. Maybe other sculptors are so busy that they don't have time for personal work, but that's bad. If you are a true artist, you have to have art-

work that is personal and special and sacred to you. You can not turn commercial artwork into that. At least I can't. That's what was great about the stuff I brought to the last Mad Model Party, it was eighty percent personal stuff that I designed and nobody had seen it before. That's what people are interested in. They can go to the toy store and see a million Obi Wan Kenobi sculptures or a million Spawn sculptures. I've sculpted Wolverine and Spiderman and the Hulk for Toy Biz over and over again. So have other sculptors. You can walk into any toy store and they're flooded with the stuff, but how many Salamander stories can you see? How many surfing Fish Creature projects can you see? That's why I got the response I did, because it's stuff people hadn't seen before. It's unique and it's personal. You have to have your own personal work, work that says something about you."

Keeping commercial projects balanced with personal projects and stepping into director's shoes to make his first film has kept Sandy quite busy, but it seems he wouldn't have it any other way. "Within the past year I've designed and sculpted toys, designed a creature for a movie, done work for theme parks and directed a film. All of that stuff was enjoyable to me, it was all fun. I'll have to admit that making a movie was the most special thing I've done because I could take these creatures I've created and make them live on the screen. I can actually make them materialize and talk and have a life up there on the screen, which for me is the be all and end all of it. I think guys like Steve Wang will agree. I have two companies now, I have Sandy Collora Studios, which handles all the design and sculpting work. I've got a great bunch of talented guys working with me right now. Most of the stuff is sculpted by myself and Clete Maffet... Karl Urhausen does all my wax clean up and jointing work and Randy Gwin makes accessories and models, picking up the sculpting slack when we have big projects. I also have Montauk Films, which handles all the film stuff. With the production company I'm writing scripts doing pre-production artwork and pitching ideas for movies and TV. I'm still sculpting toys, because I like it. Now I've got more people working for me than I ever have because there's so much work, and I can only do so much stuff in a twenty-four hour period. I remember when I was shooting my movie; I'd shoot for twelve hours, then come home and sculpt. I'd have clients calling saying: 'We need a paint master' I'd have to paint it on set. That's me, I wouldn't have my life any other way. My work is my life."

One final question sets up a quandary that is simply and elaborately answered throughout this article. How does Sandy Collora classify himself? "I don't think you can classify me. I'm sure that the clients I sculpt for would call me a sculptor. People in the entertainment industry I've designed creatures for would call me a creature designer or an effects artist. To the people who worked with me on my movie, I was the director... but to myself, I'll always be that little kid standing outside the theater dressed as Indiana Jones, waiting for 8 hours to see *Raiders of the lost Ark*."

What it finally comes down to is the term Artist; it covers a lot of ground and fits a lot of definitions. For Sandy it suits him just fine. "I think Steven Spielberg is an artist, George Lucas... Walt Disney was an artist. I think that artists and creative people make the best directors. Jim Cameron does some amazing artwork. Ridley Scott does all his own storyboards. It's people like that who have influenced me. On my film, I wrote the script, I did the production design, storyboards... designed and sculpted the creature, I enjoy it all, and feel very lucky that I can do it all. It'll be interesting to see what direction my career takes now. It's definitely in a transitional stage. I'm hoping my movie will be well received and I can get more work as a director. But I'll never stop sculpting and drawing... You know, doing the things that got me here in the first place."

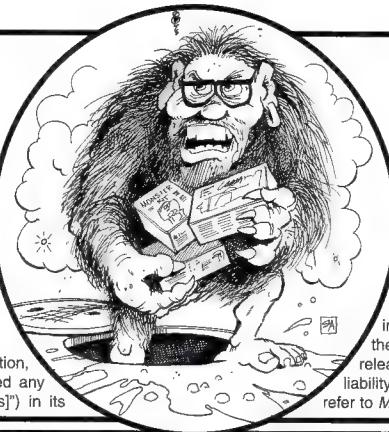
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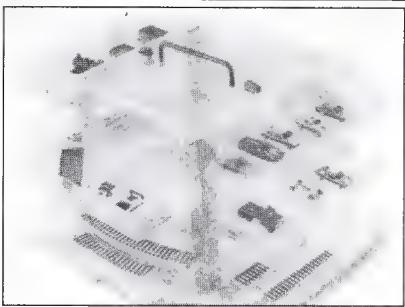
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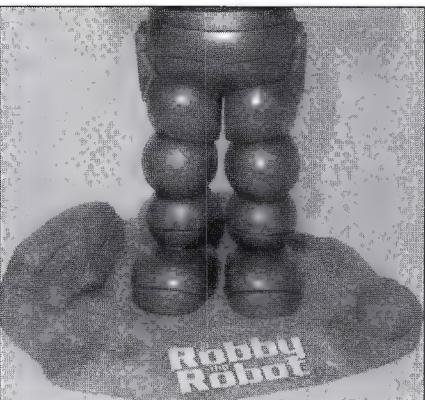
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This bust inaugurates a new series from Joordu/Fantplastic of characters from Spanish horror movies and books. Price for this bust is 6500 Pts (approx \$36.00), includes registered air-mail. Includes certificate of authenticity and is numbered by the author. For more information, contact: **Fantplastic, Apartado de correos 199, 46520 Puerto de Sagunto (Valencia)** Tel: +34 96 267 15 48 E-mail: fantplastic@geocities.com • <http://pagina.de/fantplastic>



Skyhook Models...
presents a nicely detailed, after-market item for Polar Lights' recently produced injection-molded Robby the Robot kit.

Even though the PL kit includes a base for our metallic friend, Skyhook's base is a bit more ornate, and includes rocks as well as the built-in nameplate. Base is one piece resin and costs \$10.00 plus \$4 s/h (U.S.). For more information on this and Skyhook's full line of Sci-Fi kits, please contact them at: **Skyhook Models, PO Box 327, Carmichael CA 95609** • www.skyhookmodels.com. Please includes LSASE for catalog. CA residents must add 7.75% Sales Tax to order.





Action Hobbies...

presents Dave Cockrum's "Revenge of The Creature" 1/8th scale 3 figure resin kit is "ROCKING" the GK scene! It's one of Shawn Nagle's and Danny Sirocco's favorite Creature kits. They said likeness is "dead on," terrific detailing and very dynamic! Contact: Action Hobbies, 720 Rummage Rd., Cox's Creek, KY 40013, PH: 502-543-9282 (send LSASE for catalog) or E-mail: figuredane@aol.com.

Ultimate Flame Master...

from GRS Micro Liting™. This unit was designed to replicate everything from "breathing coals" in "N" scale to a roaring fireplace in "G" scale. The UFM recreates (in scale proportions) the color and brilliant sporadic action of a real fire. Viewing may be either direct or indirect; you "set the action" and control lamp brightness. This device also has the capability of driving up to six GRS #503 3.0v flame color GOR bulbs. Just like their Ultimate Arc Welder™, it comes case assembled with action and brightness controls.

The kit includes two custom colored flame bulbs, instructions (with lighting tips) and all required installation materials. All you need do is connect the wires from this unit to a 12-20 volt ac or dc source, tune it in for the effect you want and sit back and enjoy.

Also from GRS Micro Liting: **THE SMALLEST MOTOR IN THE INDUSTRY**
To our knowledge this is the smallest and most compact motor to be found in the entire hobby industry. If you're looking for a prime mover that can be used in the tightest of quarters, this is the one. The GRS600 Ultimate Micro Motor is not a toy motor, but one built to high industrial standards. Its low-battery current and high efficiency assures a long and maintenance-free life of operation.

For more information, contact: **GRS Micro Liting, 32 Woodlake Dr SE, Rochester MN 55904 Tel: 507.288.0860 • Fax: 507.288.9181 or on the Internet at:**

www.grsmicroliting.com

www.grsmicroliting.com



Massacre Models...

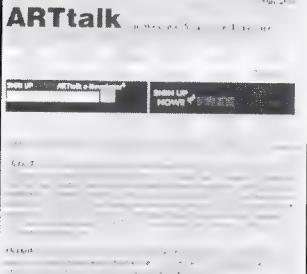
presents Blairmonster from "The Thing." This 12 piece resin kit includes denture-like teeth inserts. Castings include tight, interlocking joints. Model is sculpted by Justin Cissell (Issue #35's Kids' Korner), of Massacre Models. Also included is the base complete with dead MacReady.

Price is \$115.00 and shipping is included. It is also available built and painted for \$215.00. Kit is about 10" high and 7" wide, including the base. Available from: CRM Hobbies, 3326 Watson Rd, St. Louis MO 63139 Tel: 314.645.1117



Diceman Creations...

presents a number of kits that you just may covet. Replacement heads for Polar Lights' Phantom of the Opera as well as the Karloff Frankenstein head for the Horizon Frankenstein. Also includes the resculpted left arm. Both sculpted by Ed White. Booperella is five inches tall, four solid resin parts sculpted by the late, great Rick Wyatt, finished by Ed White. Bride of Frankenstein is 1/6 scale, four solid resin parts sculpted by Ed White. Kit is in scale with either the Biliken or Horizon Frankensteins. Last, but not least is The Baron, 1/6 scale, four solid resin parts; one clear plastic, sculpted by Ed White. For more on these and Diceman Creations' full line, contact: **Diceman Creations - Model Maniacs Magazine, 34 Feronia Way, Rutherford NJ 07070 Tel: 201.939.1521**



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ARTtalk Internet Newsletter...

ARTtalk is pleased to announce the availability of a new online quarterly newsletter: AirbrushTalk.com. This special newsletter is specifically dedicated to the airbrush! Online subscriptions to AirbrushTalk.com are FREE by simply visiting the site and signing up. You will find tips and techniques and informative how-to articles written by some of the most influential artists and art instructors who use the airbrush routinely as a powerful tool to create professional results, e.g., Michael Cacy, Ron Gress, Kirk Lybecker, Debbie Eastlack, J.W. Baker, Robert Anderson, Pat Reynolds and Mark Rush. A Bookstore, Archives, Art Galleries, Featured Artists, Trade Shows & Workshops and more are included on this site and updated monthly. You will also find links to many other valuable web sites for the visual arts, including ARTtalk.com and WatercolorTalk.com, also published by ARTtalk. Visit them at: www.AirbrushTalk.com

Bill Webb...

presents a new kit. See if you remember this one. This bust comes in one piece resin and is approximately four inches wide and three inches high. Would you like more information? If so, please contact:

Bill Webb
5 Gidji Rd Miranda 2228
Sydney NSW Australia



Revell-Monogram...

(July 5, 2000) - Morton Grove, Ill., - Revell-Monogram announced today it has discontinued plans to sell its operation to R-M Development Group LLC.

Reasons for discontinuation of the sale were not disclosed. R-M Development Group, a Chicago-based company, had signed a tentative agreement in April to acquire Revell-Monogram. "Although we were hopeful the sale would be completed, both companies have mutually agreed to discontinue the transaction," said Dave Hewitt, president, Revell-Monogram.

Revell-Monogram, the world's leading producer of plastic model kits and die cast replicas, is a business unit of Easton, PA, based Binny & Smith Inc., maker of Crayola products.

At the Newsstand



Model Graphix...

presents a ton of Sci-Fi information including many articles related to Ma.K. (Maschinen Krieger). This particular issue is dedicated to the Ma.K. World Expo 2000).

There are many articles concerning the build-up, customization and scratchbuilding efforts of Japanese modelers dealing with the Ma.K. kits based on the creative force of Kow Yokoyama.

What is also very cool about this magazine is the fact that you will likely find just about every type of conceivable model in its pages. Whether it's a race car, a plane, anime, giant robots, aircraft carriers and military - everything you could want to see and much more. All of the articles are written in Japanese, but with the incredibly detailed photos that accompany most of the articles, it's not too difficult to figure out what is happening, although it would be nice to be able to dial into the nuances of the author's work.

Model Graphix is 168 pages of modeling stuff at its best and is published 12 times a year. Like many of the models featured in this particular magazine, if you can't find Model Graphix in your neck of the woods or possibly at the shows you attend, you may wish to try Hobbylink Japan through their Internet site at: <http://www.hlj.com>

A BATGIRL DIORAMA

ARTICLE & PHOTOS BY SEAN FARRELL

I have been a huge fan of Batman™ since I first saw the Adam West Batman series in syndication back when I was a kid in the '70s. And so, when a good friend of mine recently e-mailed me to say that our local model/comics store had just received some imported Batman kits, I promptly drove down and bought them.

The Japanese model kit company Hasegawa Seisakusho released separate 1/16th scale kits of Batman, Robin and Batgirl as merchandising tie-ins for the 1997 "Batman & Robin" movie. While I wasn't a big fan of this particular film, I was only too happy to add these kits to my ever-growing Batman model kit collection. I decided to build the "B & R" version of Batgirl first (*photo 1*). Unlike the traditional Batgirl in the comics, who wears a cowl similar in style to Batman, the "B & R" Batgirl has an exposed head with only a face mask to conceal her true identity (which is actually Barbara Gordon, daughter of Gotham City Police Commissioner James Gordon. Don't ask me why, but in the "B & R" film, they changed the Batgirl character so that she became the niece of Alfred, Bruce Wayne's butler!).

With twelve pieces, assembly was pretty straightforward. After I joined the front and back halves of the torso together with super glue (I quickly discovered that glue used for ordinary plastic kits doesn't work on this model), I found that I had some decisions to make. This kit was arranged so that Batgirl's arms could be moved back and forth, like that of an action figure, but I glued them into place. I also had an option of choosing between a balled right fist, or an open right hand which rested on her hip. I chose the fist. I attached the arms and legs onto the body (*photo 2*), then filled in any major gaps with Milliput™ epoxy putty. I left her cape and head off so I could effectively paint them and the body separately.

In the film, Batgirl's entire costume was black—which I thought was a shame, because when I examined the model, I discovered that her costume had an interesting design pattern that begged to be painted in separate colors. Once I decided to use Tamiya acrylics, I primed the model with an undercoat of Flat White. Then I painted the entire costume Light Gray. Once this was done, I applied Tamiya Field Blue—which is a very dark shade of blue—to the torso, forearms, and legs. The bat emblem on her chest and her belt—as well as the bat designs on her arms and legs—were all painted flat black. I also painted her cape Field Blue on the outside and Light Gray on the inside. After painting her face flat flesh, I gave her brown eyes and sandy brown hair (oddly enough, Flat Earth turned out to be the best suited color for her hair). I lightly dry-brushed a small amount of pink over her cheeks to give her face some color. Last, but not least, her mask was painted field blue. As a final touch, I mixed some Field Blue with flat white and dry-brushed this over her shoulders and some other raised areas of her costume. Batgirl was done (*photo 3*).

The Diorama:

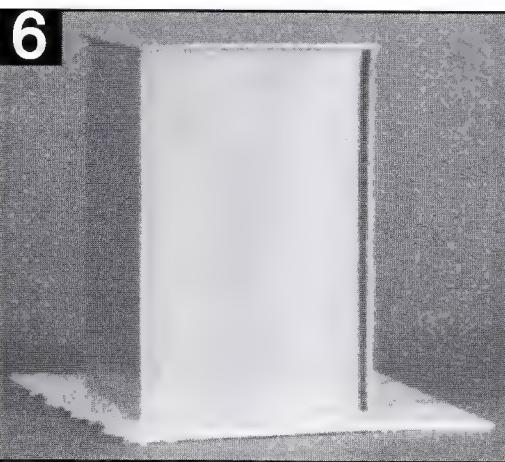
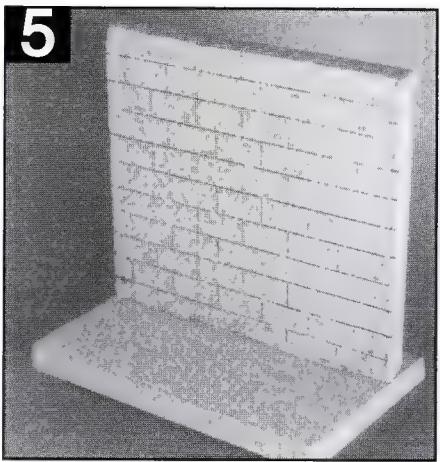
I was pleased enough with the model to want to build a little diorama for her. The model's small size (barely 4 1/2 inches in height) was an added plus, since this meant that a diorama could be kept small. The model's stance, with her fist on her hip and a slight smile on her face, suggested a young woman who was mighty pleased with herself. I came up with the idea that Batgirl, during a routine patrol of the streets of Gotham City, just happened to notice a newspaper headline which triumphantly blared her name. This would cause her to pause momentarily and reflect with satisfaction on how she just was making a difference in Gotham City after all. All fine and well, but now I had to build this!

For the base itself, I chose to use two sheets of Balsa Foam™, which is a rigid, gritty material that can be carved and shaped into any design or pattern. (I had previously used it to make a pair of head stones in a graveyard diorama for my GEometric Son of Frankenstein model.)

For the wall, I took one 9 by 6 inch standard sheet of Balsa Foam and cut it to 5 1/2 inches in height (I left it at its original width of six inches). Then I used a ruler to guide my hobby knife as I carved horizontal lines across the sheet of Balsa Foam, keeping them exactly half an inch apart. After this, I cut vertical lines every inch—making sure they were directly in the center of the half inch block above—thus creating a pattern which suggested the wall was made of large concrete blocks. I painted the wall flat black, making sure the paint filled in the lines, then I dry brushed this with Sky Gray.

(One note when painting untreated Balsa Foam by hand: the paint has a tendency to fill in the texture, which means the Balsa Foam will actually soak up the paint like a sponge, and you'll wind up using more paint just to cover the surface. In retrospect, I should have sealed the Balsa Foam with a sealant prior to painting. So I'll try this the next time I use Balsa Foam. However, if you'd rather not bother with any sealant, regular paint still effectively seals in the Balsa Foam, just be prepared to use a lot of it!)

After cutting a base 3 3/4 inches in width, I also painted this Sky Gray over a flat black base. After inserting a pair of thin styrene rods for support (*photo 4*), I then secured the wall onto the base with white glue (*photo 5*).



Finishing up the wall and creating the newspaper dispenser in three easy steps!

If Batgirl is going to notice a newspaper headline, then I need a newspaper dispenser. I tried to see if I could buy a doll house version, but couldn't find any. So the only option was to scratch-build my own. This would be the first time I had ever scratchbuilt something from sheet plastic, but I wasn't too intimidated because of the newspaper dispenser's basic, box-like shape.

After taking reference photos of a real newspaper dispenser at my local bus stop (you should have seen some of the stares I got from patrons waiting for the bus!), I got started by cutting a piece of sheet plastic into a box shape that measured 1 1/2 inch in length and 1 1/4 inch in width and white-glued this down to a slightly larger sheet of cardboard. This sheet of plastic would serve as the base of the dispenser, while the cardboard would serve to help hold everything together during assembly.

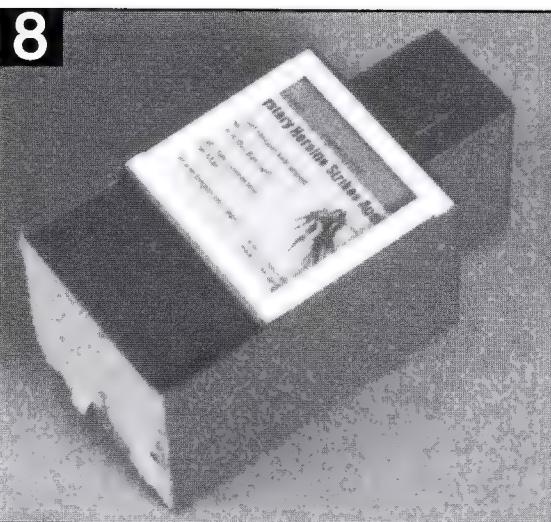
I then cut three sheets of plastic about two inches in height each and glued them around three sides of the base. I cut the side pieces about one millimeter wider than the base, because I noticed on the real dispenser that the front section was set slightly inward, with a "lip" on the edges, so that the dispenser door was flush with the sides. When I topped this off with another plastic sheet, I basically had a little gray box (*photo 6*).

I built another, smaller box atop of the big one using the same technique as before. This would serve as the "coin depositor" section, where people would place their money to buy a paper. I made a coin slot by drilling two pilot holes, then cutting out a vertical slit between them with a hobby knife. I glued a smaller sheet of plastic on the front of the top box to suggest that this was where the newspaper worker collected the coins from. I should mention that I left the back of the dispenser open, because this section would be facing the wall of my diorama, anyway (*photo 7*).

Now for the really fun part, making up my own newspaper. I did this on my computer, using Corel Photo Paint. I decided to call my paper the Gotham City News, with the headline "Mystery Heroine Strikes Again!" I wrote up the front cover blurbs, and, for the "artist's conception" of Batgirl, I used a clip art image of a mythical flying female from the Corel image catalog, which I converted into black and white to fit the newspaper.

After painting the entire newspaper dispenser Tamiya Flat Blue, I decided to work on the door, which would display the newspaper. After properly sizing my front page so that it would fit, I printed it out on regular paper, cut it out, and placed it within the top portion of what will be the door. I cut out a sheet of clear plastic and put this over the paper. All of this was framed with four strips of Evergreen StripStyrene (.020 by .125" size), which I also cut to fit. I eventually simplified the headline to "Batgirl Strikes!" because this can be more easily read (*photo 8*).

Once the newspaper and door were set, I dug out a plastic handle from my spare parts box and glued it to the top of the door. I painted this and the



strip styrene frame Flat Blue, then dry brushed the edges and raised areas of the overall dispenser with a mixture of Flat Blue and Flat White. I filled in the key hole with putty and, after making a slit in the putty with my hobby knife to indicate where the key slides in, I painted it silver.

I painted a silver box around the coin slot, then inked in 10¢ with a very fine felt tip pen. However, the pen was still too thick to adequately draw the "cent" symbol; after repeated attempts—which required me to repaint the silver box several times—I had to settle for a little black ball with a vertical line for the "cent" symbol. But given the small scale of the model, this wasn't too noticeable, anyway. One last detail I added was the little ad banner at the bottom of the newspaper dispenser. This was also printed on my computer and secured with white glue.

I wasn't happy with having both the wall and sidewalk the same color, so I painted the sidewalk with Tamiya Buff, then carved three lines every two inches to mimic the sections of a sidewalk. Mixing a black wash (roughly, about two parts water to one part black paint), I spread this all over the base, making sure plenty of the wash got into the lines. Then I lightly dry-brushed more Buff over the entire base, being careful to leave some exposed spots of black wash to indicate that this sidewalk had been well-used.

I also noticed that the wall looked a little blank, so I used my trusty computer once more to make up some election posters. Not only do the posters add some color to the diorama, but they also help to anchor the scene as being in Gotham City. They were secured to the wall with white glue (the names of the "candidates" were taken from the pets of my friends, as well as my own dog, Alfie, a Yorkshire Terrier I had as a kid).

I used another thin styrene rod to help anchor Batgirl's left foot to the base of the diorama. Because Batgirl's foot was very small and thin, I had to be careful when drilling a hole with my Dremel™ Drill. I used only the very tip of the drill bit to create a pilot hole, then widened the hole using a hobby knife. I permanently secured the newspaper dispenser to the base. Both Batgirl and the dispenser were super-glued in place.

And there you have it. Instead of merely having a Batgirl model, I now have Batgirl in a "slice of life" scene from Gotham City. Granted, she may not look like the conventional Batgirl we all know and love, but I like to think this is either a Batgirl from an alternate universe, or a second generation Batgirl (perhaps Barbara Gordon's daughter) who has taken up the crime fighting crusade sometime in the near future. While the newspaper dispenser took up most of my time, it wasn't as hard to build as I had feared, and its presence adds greatly to the diorama. It just goes to show that you should never refrain from trying new things.

MR

SHOWTIME!

Show Promoters: Please feel free to fax or mail us information about your upcoming event and we'll post it here. Thanks! Information is placed on a "first come, first served" basis, as room permits. Contact information: Modeler's Resource, Showtime!, 4120 Douglas Blvd., #300, 372, Granite Bay, CA 95746-5036. Fax: 916-784-8384 e-mail: modres@qualnet.com. *Information as published was submitted by the entity involved and if there are any discrepancies or inaccuracies, please contact that specific group or organization for clarification and/or correction. Modeler's Resource wants the information that is published within its pages to be as accurate as is possible and would appreciate the individual organization submitting such information being notified of any corrections to its copy, with a request that Modeler's Resource be informed of such changes. We would then be pleased to publish any copy correction or adjustments.*

September - 2000:

• My Favorite Model:

Model contest and swap meet Saturday, September 2nd, 2000 in Fayetteville, GA from 8:00am to 3:00pm. Open to all types subjects scales of scale models. Sponsored by South Atlanta IPMS & Fayetteville Model Shop. Entries are free. Admission is free. Vendor tables are free on a first come-first served basis. For further information, send a SASE to **Fayetteville Model Shop, 101 Rainbow Way, Fayetteville GA 30214**. This is an IPMS Sanctioned & Insured Event

• 9th Annual Model Show:

Presented by the Cape Cod Scale Modelers Association and Centerline Hobbies at the **Hyannis Elks Lodge, 852 Bearse's Way, Hyannis, MA**, September 24th, 2000 from 9:00am to 4:00pm. For more information, please contact Ron: (508) 394-5513; Jeff: jh125@capecod.net; Rich: rreingo@capecod.net

October - 2000:

• IPMS Vancouver:

30th Annual Fall Model Show and Swap Meet, October 7, 2000 at the **Bonsor Recreation Complex, 6550 Bonsor, Burnaby, BC Canada**. For more information, please contact Kevin Brown. Tel: 604-939-9929 • E-mail: ipmsmail@home.com or on the Net at <http://members.tripod.com/~ipms>

• MODELTOBERFEST:

Sunday, October 7th, 2000, Modeltoberfest '00, sixth model contest and swap meet, presented by the Southern Nevada Scale Modelers IPMS/USA Region VIII will be held at **Durango High School, 1700 Dewey St., Las Vegas, NV**. For registration and/or vendor table details, send a LSASE to Andy Harlow, 508 Glendale Ave., N, Las Vegas, NV 89030-5677 or jkgalza@aol.com or 702.567.2040.

• Chiller Theatre:

You've heard of this mega-event. Multiple times a year. Catch it this coming October - Sheraton Meadowlands Plaza, East Rutherford, NJ. The walking zombies, model kits, scream queens, contests, film screenings, autograph sessions and everything else you've come to know and love will all be on hand! Call the **Chiller Hotline** at 201.457.1991 for updated show information and guest line-up. Check them out on-line at <http://chillerttheatre.com/>

• Gorefest 2000:

Presented by the Creed Family Entertainment, Sunday October 29, 2000 at the **Four Points Sheraton Hotel, 700 West Huntington Dr, Monrovia CA**. Sci-Fi, Fantasy Model Contest, Kids Costume Contest, Vendor Faire, Adult Costume Contest & Dance and Scream Queen Contest. For info: George Louis Creed, Pasadena Modelers Society, 315 W Hilcrest Blvd, Monrovia CA 91016 or E-mail: Pasadena Modeler@cs.com

November - 2000:

• ModCon 2K: INFORMATION, AWARENESS, EDUCATION, ENTERTAINMENT, CONVENTION

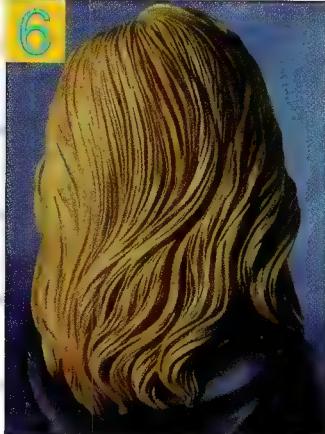
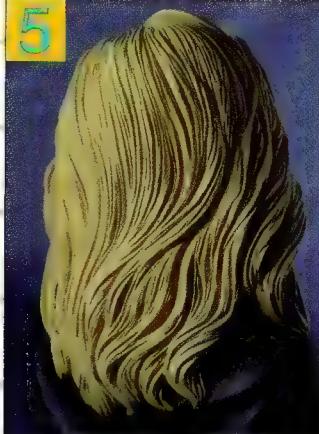
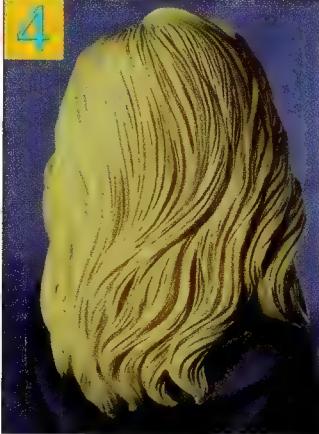
The North Central West Virginia Scale Modelers presents their third annual show and contest on Saturday, November 11th, 2000 at the **Morgantown, WV Ramada Inn** from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm. For a special room rate of \$58.00 per night, contact the Ramada Inn at 304.296.3431 and mention this event. For more information and a free contest flyer, contact Scott Owen at 304.842.7091 or Gary Kulchock at 304.328.5672. E-mail: gkulchock@aol.com. For complete guest, dealer and competition information, visit the NCWVSM website at <http://wvnvm.wvnet.edu/~tgilpin/home.html>

• UncommonCon:

Presenting a brand new convention for Dallas/Fort Worth and all points far and near. UncommonCon will be a celebration of comic books, role-playing games, science-fiction and fantasy literature and art, anime and manga, and all related hobbies and art forms. November 24-26, 2000 at the **Hyatt-Regency Hotel, Irving, TX** at the D/FW International Airport. Single Day: \$15. Weekend Pass: \$35. Contact: James Echols, UncommonCon@aol.com, Tel: 214-497-9984 Internet: www.uncommoncon.com E-mail: info@uncommoncon.com Full Press Packet is available upon request.

PHOTOCOPY IT!

Here's another installment of "Photocopy It!". We give you permission to make a photocopy of this page for your personal use. Keep it near your workbench or work area for reference. Yep, it's going to cost a bit more to make a color copy this time - sorry!



This *Photocopy It!* gives you the basic colors necessary to create realistic brunette (dark brown), blonde, and medium red hair. Let's begin!

We used Ceramcoat, Liquitex and/or Folk Art acrylic paints. They clean up with soap and water and can be found in any craft store. The techniques we will use are drybrushing and washes. In a previous *Photocopy It!* you learned how to drybrush. To make a wash, simply take some paint and thin it with water to an ink consistency.

For a brunette, base coat the hair in burnt umber. Seal it with a light coat of Testor's Dull-Cote™ (*Photo #1*). Drybrush the burnt umber with Goldens Brown and then lightly drybrush with sandstone gray. Seal with DullCote (*Photo #2*). To bring out the texture and details, apply a wash of dark burnt umber. This blends the different tones. When dry, seal with DullCote (*Photo #3*).

Now let's paint blonde hair. We are calling this a natural medium blonde. Begin by base coating the hair with yellow ochre. Seal with DullCote (*Photo #4*). Drybrush light cream over the yellow ochre. Next, drybrush

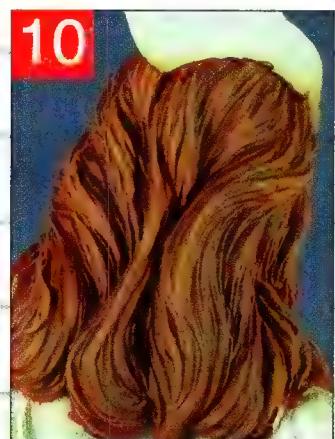
the highest points with white (*Photo #5*). To blend these colors, apply a thin wash of light tan mixed with a little raw sienna. After this wash, you may want to drybrush again with some light cream (*Photo #6*). This drybrush will bring back any highlights that were completely covered with the wash. When dry, seal with DullCote.

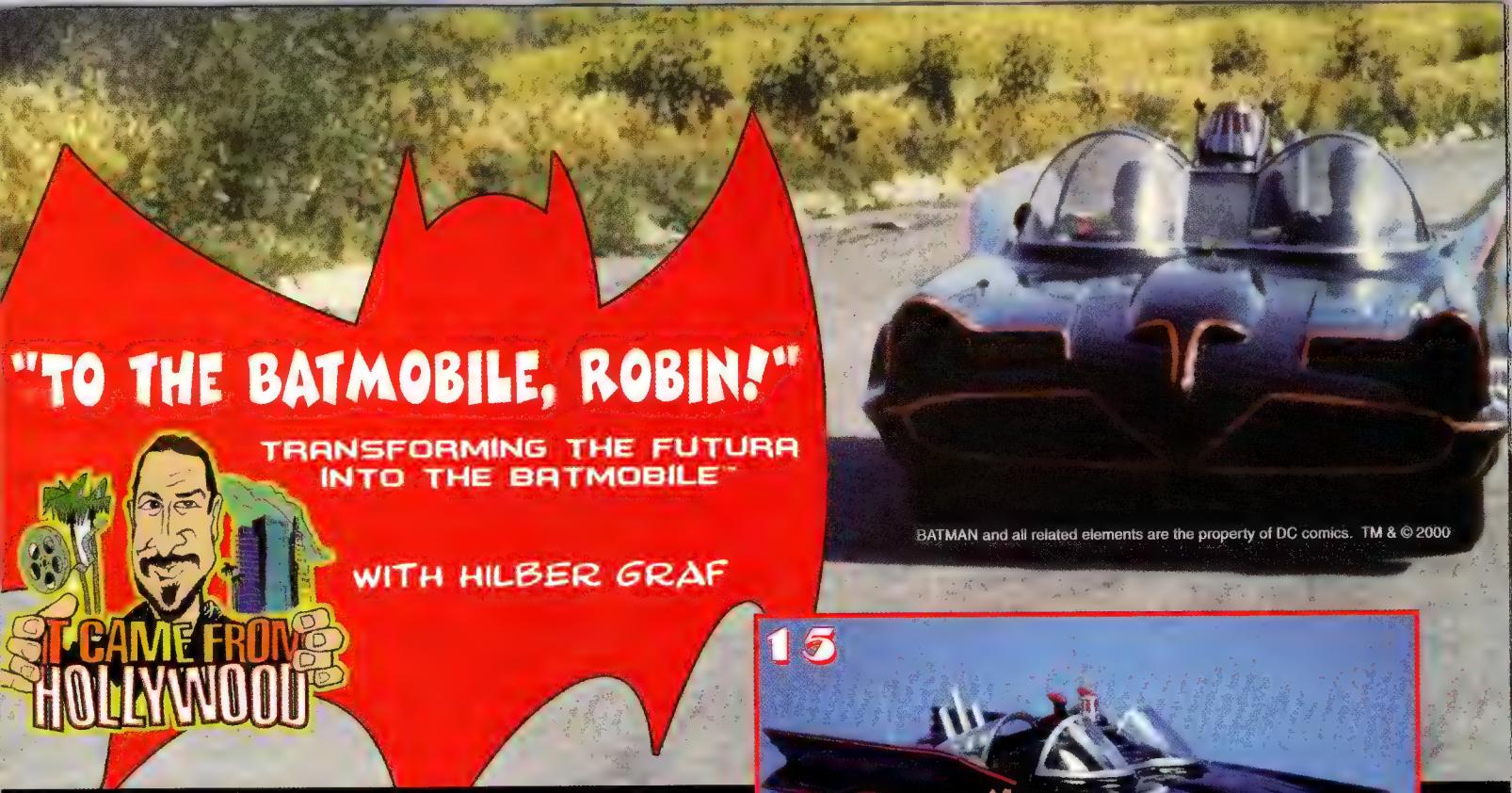
The red hair we're doing is a medium red - not an auburn and darker than strawberry blonde. Base coat the hair in burnt orange. Seal with DullCote (*Photo #7*). Drybrush highlights with a golden straw color mixed with a touch of plain old orange. Seal with DullCote (*Photo #8*). Apply a wash of burnt sienna mixed with a couple drops of burnt umber. When dry, seal with DullCote (*Photo #9*). For the final highlights, lightly drybrush the hair with golden straw mixed with a bit more orange. Seal with DullCote (*Photo #10*). You have red hair!

Play with the color mixtures. Don't be afraid - it's only paint. Have fun!



This issue's "Photocopy It!" is by Mike & Cindy Morgan





Atomic batteries to power! Turbines to speed!" With those words in January of 1966, the TV series BATMAN™ was launched into American popular culture. A short-lived sensation for only three seasons, nevertheless, BATMAN thrilled kids across the nation because it brought a comic book hero to life. Twice a week in prime time, television screens flickered with flashy costumes, colorful graphics, wild cartoon villains and wonderful gadgets.

I was eleven years old when I sat in the Batmobile for the first time. It was during a 1966 promotional tour for the new series. The crime fighter's wheels were sleek, black, big and jazzy and I'll never forget that moment. "Where does he get those marvelous toys?" asked the Joker in the 1989 big screen movie, BATMAN. Read on and I'll reveal where and how you can build your very own 1966 Batmobile. To the bat poles, Robin!

Some Bat-History

One of the most famous cars in the world, the Batmobile™ is a vehicle with a checkered past. Originally, the Batmobile was a 1956 Lincoln-Mercury concept show car, the Futura. Costing the Ford Motor Corporation \$250,000 to produce one prototype, the Futura incorporated into its design a clear bubbletop-enclosed driver and passenger compartment, recessed headlights, tail fins and lots of chrome. It was kind of new car the designers were telling consumers they would all be driving by 1965.

Although the Futura became a very popular attraction on the car show circuit, Ford opted not to put their automobile of tomorrow into production. Instead, they loaned it to MGM studios to use in their 1959 romantic comedy, *It Started With a Kiss*. After filming, Ford never picked up the Futura and MGM sent it to famed car customizer George Barris for storage. MGM failed to pay the storage fees and Barris took possession of the car as payment.

When contracted in 1965 by 20th Century Fox Studios, Barris spent \$30,000 to convert the Futura into the famous Batmobile for the first episode. Over the next few months Barris Kustom Inc. would create four more, though there were no other Futuras available. Barris lengthened the chassis of smaller cars and used molds of the original Batmobile to create fiberglass bodies on three vehicles. The fifth Batmobile was constructed of metal and became a stunt car for the TV series and 1966 feature film.

All five Batmobiles still exist today. George Barris owns the Futura and frequently tours the vehicle at numerous regional events. Number



From the Revell Futura to the Barris Batmobile!

three Batmobile is owned and displayed by the Imperial Palace Hotel & Casino in Biloxi, Mississippi. The other three are privately owned in Virginia, Florida and New Jersey.

The Bat-Plan

After a rigorous discussion between the Dynamic Duo of Fred DeRuvo and myself (don't ask which one is Batman or Robin, the Boy Wonder), a stereotypical scene of the Batmobile darting out of the Batcave came to mind as a terrific idea. Those five seconds of film may be the most immediately recognizable of the classic television series.

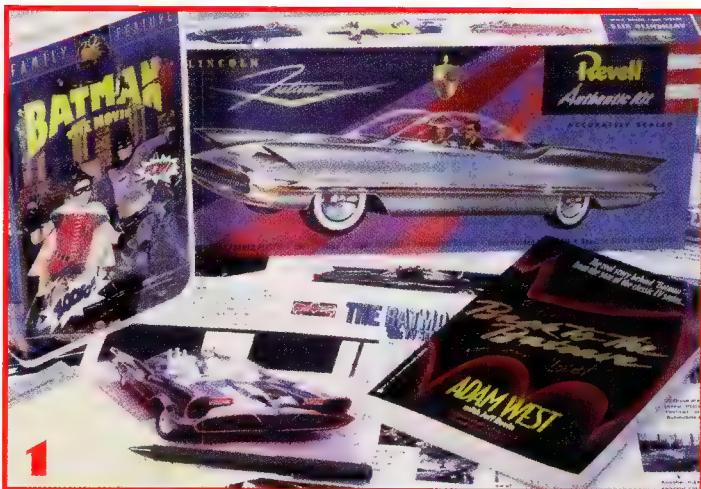
An obstacle as confusing as deciphering one of the Riddler's riddles confronted me. Where would I find a model of the Batmobile? Aurora produced a 1/32nd-scale version during the 1960s that's now a rare, overpriced collectible. Some Japanese model company made a terrible toy-like Batmobile about 10 years ago. Also there was an unauthorized resin garage kit available for a while during the '90s, but none of these were practical options.

I would have to either scratchbuild or convert something into the Batmobile. In 1956, Revell released a 1/25th scale Futura. It was reissued briefly in 1997 as part of their nostalgia series. Fred located a kit and we were in business. I was to relive history by converting the Futura into a crime fighter's low rider (*Photo 1*).

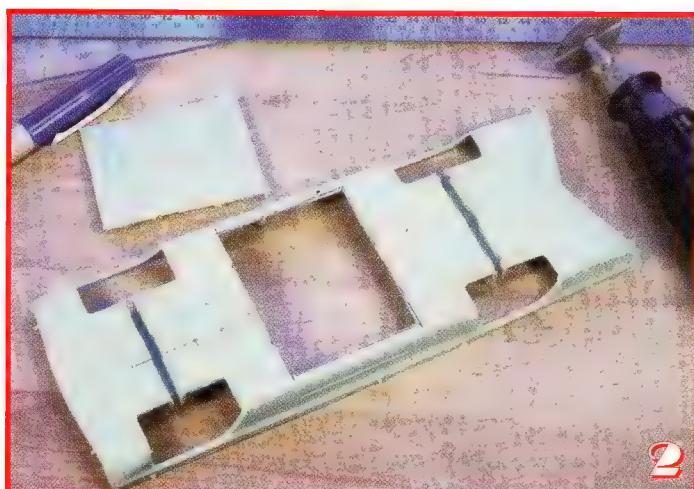
A Bat-Costume change

A quick inspection of the Revell model impressed me, particularly for an example originally molded during the early years of plastic kit production. The Futura's distinctive lines were well duplicated and, though there were few elaborate parts, the details were crisply molded and fitted together fairly well.

I noted that Barris Kustom retained most of the Futura's design when converting it into the Batmobile. The leading edges of the tail fins were extended, center section of the bubbletop discarded, wheel wells opened up to expose the wider tires and front end altered into a stylized



1



2

bat face. When converting the Futura kit, these are key areas a modeler must devote effort to.

The instruction sheet calls for building the car body around the assembled driver interior. To do so would make conversion difficult because of the serious amount of body filling and sanding necessary, which could mess up all the interior detail work. Instead, I cut out a 2 3/8" by 1 7/8" rectangle where the interior parts fit on the chassis (*Photo 2*). Setting aside the interior parts for now, I concentrated on customizing the car body.

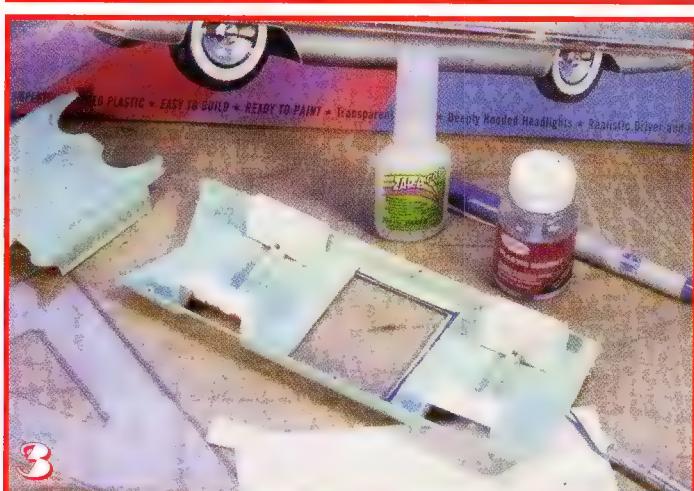
Revell omitted wheel wells, which makes the completed Futura model look like a toy rather than a replica in miniature. Using the kit wheels as reference to determine size and tire clearance, I fabricated and installed styrene sheet boxes on the chassis (Part 2) to represent the wells (*Photo 3*). Gap-filling super glue reinforced the seams. Next, the headlight parts (Parts 4 to 7) were glued together, then this sub-assembly and upper body (Parts 13 to 17) were attached to the chassis as per the instruction sheet.

Automobile designs during the '50s frequently hid tires by lowering the body sides in an attempt to achieve a streamline appearance. Barris wanted to install wide "muscle car" wheels and tires. To do so, he had to flare the fenders. With the aid of an ellipse template, I marked the fenders and cut out the flare utilizing a Dremel 1/2" barrel sander (*Photo 4*). The cut out extended about 1/8" above the kit wheel well openings.

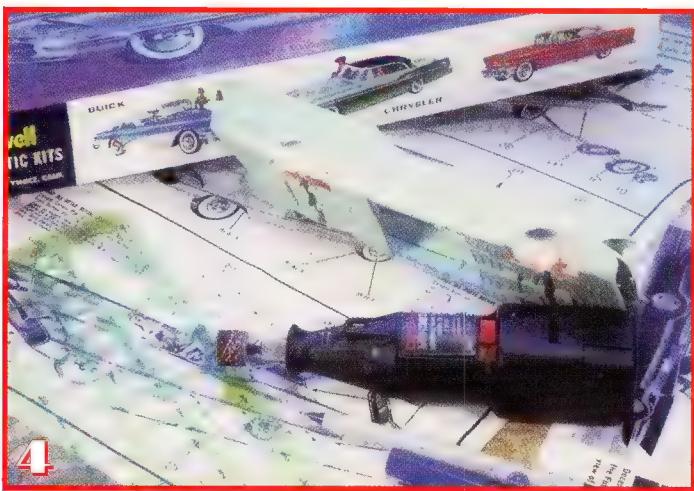
After studying photographs of the Batmobile, I turned my attention to altering the hood and nose grill (*Photo 5*). The headlight hoods were too pronounced and needed to be blunted slightly. Sheet plastic fillets were added to the outside edges, squaring off the hoods. The kit grill (Part 22) was omitted and a sheet plastic insert was installed, recessed 3/16", in the resulting opening. A .030" sheet plastic rectangle lengthened the hood bump by 1". I glued a 1" triangle of .020" thick sheet plastic to the grill's center. A 1/8" wide strip of .030" plastic connected the hood with the nose. Then I applied Testor's Red Putty to fill seams and build up the rounded contours.

A word about using filler putty in customizing model car bodies: When building up large areas, you should spread thin layers on the desired spots. Allow the putty to dry thoroughly, then wet sand with 400-grit sandpaper. Repeat the process until the contours are correct and all surface imperfections disappear. Avoid thick applications of putty as it will take too long to dry and the putty becomes brittle and crumbly. Large areas of filler putty can shrink slightly as it dries and cures, sometimes cracking days after application. If possible, it's a good idea to set the car body aside for a couple of days and see if cracks appear. Unfortunately, I was on a deadline, so I had to take a chance and forge ahead.

A prominent fender and side trim ridge was evident both on the Futura and Batmobile. To depict this feature, a .100" half round plastic strip was glued on the raised body fender edge. I bent this to follow the wheel well openings. It looked crude at first, but once it was filled and shaped, I was satisfied (*Photo 6*). Dental tools were employed to re-scribe the door line grooves. Plastic sheet lengthened the tail fins' leading edges. The scalloped bat wing shapes on the tail fins were accomplished with round modeler's files.



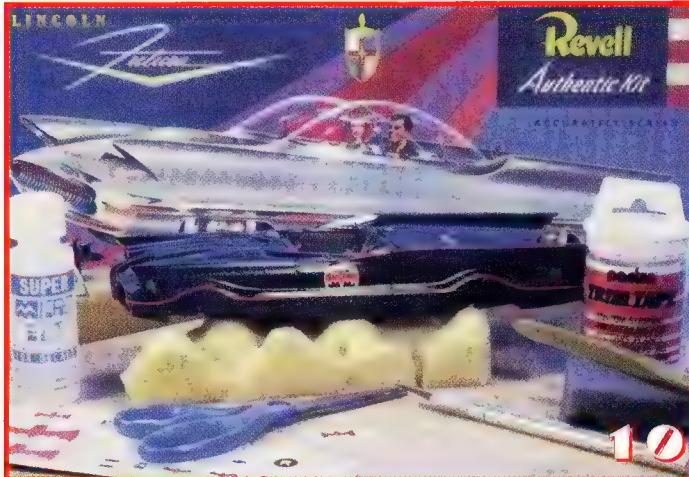
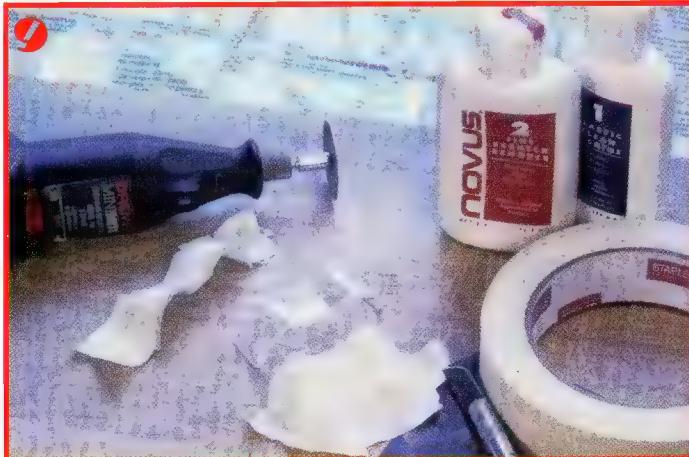
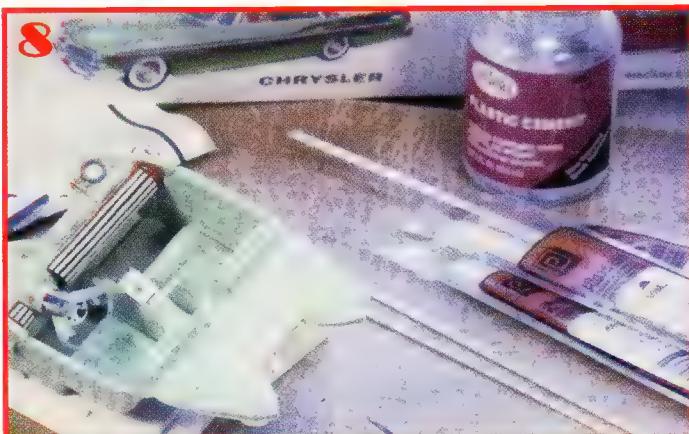
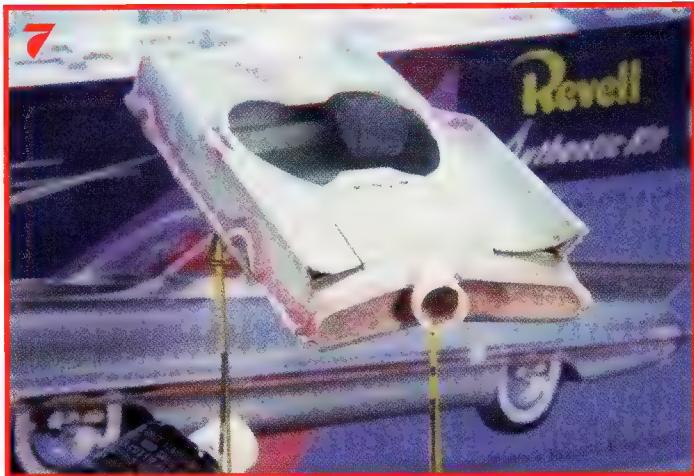
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The rear bumper area was next for alteration. The bumper (Part 23) had raised taillight details that needed to be cut off. Body filler putty smoothed out the resulting rough surface (*Photo 7*). A turbine afterburner was fashioned from $\frac{1}{2}$ " lengths of $\frac{1}{2}$ " and $\frac{3}{8}$ " diameter plastic tubes. This was centered in the rear bumper and connected by a lot of filler putty. Following reference photos, I detailed the turbine afterburner with $\frac{3}{16}$ " long strips of $.020 \times .060$ " styrene strip. The rocket launcher tube holes were made right behind the cockpit opening with a $\frac{1}{8}$ " drill.

The Bat-Cockpit

A new interior floor was cut from $.040"$ styrene sheet to match the hole previously made in the chassis (Part 2). Barris retained the *Futura*'s interior design, so it was proper to use the kit parts. The kit interior (Parts 1 & 3) was centered and positioned so it would properly align with the body when inserted.

In his book, *Back to the Batcave*, Batman star Adam West recalled leaping into the Batmobile always made him feel like a real caped crime fighter. Even though nothing actually worked, all the dummy gadgetry had an aura of magic. And all those hysterical instrument labels! Bat Radar, Bat Scanner and Bat Ram - Bat whatever.

Referring once again to my collection of Bat Photos (ha!), I noted numerous push buttons, switches and lights. Since my Batmobile was in a rather small 1/25th scale, it was more practical - and just as effective - to simulate these details rather than painstakingly attempting to duplicate all of them (*Photo 8*). Slicing plastic rod like salami, and gluing them to various logical spots on the dash, made push buttons. To duplicate the *Futura*'s unique rolled dashboard compartments, I split $\frac{3}{8}$ " diameter tubing lengthwise. This was positioned and detailed with many $\frac{1}{16}$ " plastic strips. Robin's Bat Radar screen came from a 1/35th-scale car headlight lens. Like the full size article, the characteristic U-ring steering wheel was modified from the *Futura*.

Two distinct details are very identifiable by Bat-fans; the Bat Phone and the Bat Fire Extinguisher, and needed to be carefully fashioned. For example, the Bat Phone body was cut from a 1/72nd-scale car transmission with a bat wing shaped handset fashioned of sheet plastic. I wrapped a strand of thin copper wire around a pin, removed and stretched it to form the phone cord.

Usually older kit supplied clear parts are rather poor. Often they are too thick or scratched. In the past I've replaced these parts with new vacu-formed items. But I realize most modelers don't own nor have access to professional vacu-form equipment. The kit's bubbletop can be modified IF you are very, very careful. To protect the surfaces I wrapped the canopy with masking tape (*Photo 9*). Fitting my Dremel tool with a disc saw blade, I slowly cut away the unwanted center section from the egg-like bubble ends. This is a tricky procedure, but does work if you don't rush. Novus makes plastic polishing products that restore the clarity and finish to clear plastic.

A Fresh Coat of Bat-Paint

Black as Gotham City night was the color of Batman's ride. My choice

was Testor's Model Master Classic Black. For speed, I used a spray can instead of an airbrush, which worked rather well. Once painted, I set the body aside to cure for three days before proceeding (*Photo 10*).

Though it looked very snappy on the real thing, the task of hand painting all that red pin striping seemed overwhelming. Pactra produces "Trim Tape", an ultra thin, very flexible custom vinyl striping material designed for R/C models. Available in eleven colors, including red, each container is packed with 6-foot lengths in eight different widths. The 1/16th" is close enough to scale for this vehicle. "Trim Tape" is self-adhesive and Pactra claims it's permanent and highly resistant to peeling.

Working slowly over the Batmobile's bulging fenders and long tail fins, I soon became amazed at this tape's ability to go around sharp curves and bends. To fix it in place you have to gently rub the tape down. Some areas were too complicated, so I hand painted pin strips in Testor's Guards Red, which is a close color match. It looked great and was less nerve-racking than attempting to hand paint all those lines.

Fred gave me a decal sheet containing bat insignias in various scales. (The company that produced these, T & T Productions is out of business but you might try **Green's Model, PO Box 55787, Riverside CA 92517 Tel: 909.684.5300 • Fax: 909.684.8819** for your own set — Ed.) To assure better adhesion, I like "Micro Set" on decals. This liquid setting solution softens decals and makes them conform like paint. Easy to use. Clean the area with Micro Set applied with a brush. Apply the decal on the wetted surface and carefully apply more solution on top of the decal. In a couple of minutes the decal will soften. Press on the decal with a piece of foam rubber (weather stripping material).

An Eye for Bat Details

Most of the cockpit was colored black with various details painted in silver, white and red (*Photo 11*). Mesh grilling in the car nose and rear bumper was created from Scale Scenic's aluminum Micro-Mesh, cut to shape and super glued to the openings. Model railroad hobby shops carry this product. You can also use Trimaster's photo-etch screening, though this product is much more expensive.

The canopy roll bar was cut from .020" styrene sheet (*Photo 12*). I studied reference photos and fashioned the "emergency Bat turn, police beacon and light assemblies out of plastic tube, strip and sheet. As a cool finishing touch to the interior, I applied "Bat-labeling" signs from the above-mentioned decal sheet.

With the cockpit completed, I could now permanently attach the canopy roll bar assembly. My spare parts box supplied the radio antenna and Bat chutes (*Photo 13*). Rocket launcher tubes were cut from 1/8" tube; the center pipe cut to 3/4" and the other pair cut to 1/2". A Batmobile license plate decal was attached to a like-size piece of plastic sheet and glued to the rear bumper beneath the afterburner.

Kick the Bat Tires and Rotate the Bat Wheels

Wheels and tires were a big problem on the full size Batmobile. Originally Barris fitted the vehicle with Dragway five spoke wheels and Mickey Thompson Indy Profile tires. These consistently went flat between filming scenes. Mounting Radir rims equipped with Firestone tires seemed to solve the problem.

MRC produces muscle car accessory sets. One has Cragar wheels and Thompson tires that resemble the Batmobile's original equipment (*Photo 14*). These are very easy to fit to any 1/25th scale car model and require no painting. The tiny bat-shaped hubcaps were carved from sheet styrene and painted red.

It finally became time for a "walk-around" inspection. I stared at the completed vehicle from almost every angle, checking for any glitches in the paint. A few touch-ups by brush were indeed required. Like a prospective new car buyer, I caressed the showroom finish (*Photo 15; first page of this article*). Holy car wax, Batman!

Wait a minute, Boy wonder! The Batmobile is missing something - the road to Gotham City! Will Batman and Robin find the highway in time? Or will the Dynamic Duo be stranded off-road without a map? Tune in next issue to see how to create an exciting diorama for your Batmobile. Same Bat magazine, same Bat column!



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THE PJS

Will Vinton Studios: More Than Clay

Will Vinton Studios has put its indelible mark on animation with an unmistakable style and an unforgettable word, Claymation. The Studio broke technological and artistic ground with short animated films like Mountain Music, Rip Van Winkle, Creation and the Academy Award winning Closed Mondays. The trademark Claymation style has been used in everything from TV specials and commercials to full feature films. Probably Will Vinton Studios' best known creation to date is the singing and dancing California Raisins, which went from TV commercial to pop culture phenomenon. Last year, the studio broke new ground again with the production of the first ever, prime time, stop-motion animated series, The PJs.

Stop-motion or dimensional animation is a laborious, time consuming effort using articulated, three-dimensional models that are moved in tiny increments and photographed one frame at a time. With twenty-four frames making up each second of screen time, the production of even several minutes of animation is a colossal undertaking. Producing an entire TV series in this manner is a task that would challenge the sanity of most mere mortals, but the folks at Will Vinton Studios teamed up with Eddie Murphy, producers Ron Howard, Brian Grazer, Touchstone TV and the Fox Network to prove that it could be done and done well.

The show itself began as an idea by Eddie Murphy to do a "Thunderbirds" type show set in the ghetto. The original idea was to use the "Supermarionation" style and make an action/adventure oriented show. The search was on for a studio that could handle that type of production and when the call came in to Will Vinton Studios, they seized the opportunity to jump from mostly commercial production into the creation of a TV series. After a number of meetings the producers agreed to have Vinton Studios do some test footage. On the strength of those tests, the stop motion process was selected as the best way to make the series work and Will Vinton Studios was signed to do the physical production.

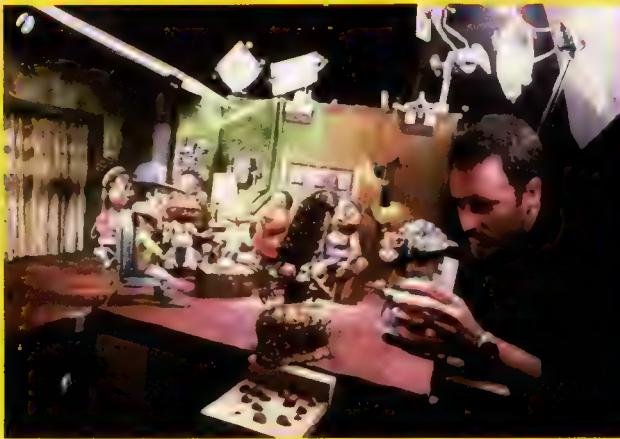
The first step in bringing the PJs to life was the creation of the characters. The creators and producers of the show came up with a list of characters and the artists at Will Vinton Studios had a marathon maquette sculpting session. Using materials ranging from clay to Sculpey™ to Magic Sculp™, the artists ran the gamut from ultra cartoony, stylized characters to more realistic concepts for the main characters. Nelson Lowry, the Character Manager for the show, explained what happened next. "We lined them all up and stood back to take a look at what we had. Once we had agreed on a specific style, one designer named Colin Batty worked with some of the other designers and developed a sketched-out assembly of the characters. That went on for a long time with the studio fine tuning the look of the characters. We wanted these guys to be recognizable even in silhouette. Once we had a good handle on the design, they immediately went into sculpting."

A "final" sculpture was only the beginning of the approval process; however. Once the characters were rendered in three dimensions, it could be seen how they worked with lighting and on film. After more changes to these sculptures to make them film friendly, they went to be cast in hydrostone and master molds were created. Even though the Will Vinton Studios is known for its clay animation, the decision was made not to use clay for the PJs. Nelson Lowry explained, "We wanted to avoid clay completely in this show because it's far too labor intensive for series work. The fingerprints and the re-sculpting every time you took a shot just made it impossible. So we went into a process which is basically painted foam latex. We decided to go with hard cast heads for ease of maintenance in series work. These use replacement eyelids and mouths, which some people like and some don't. I think they work great with the characters. Of course, we have to produce them by the thousands because each character has a set of ten or fifteen replacement eyelids and up to forty different mouths. Depending upon which angle the character is seen from the left or right there are left and right mouth shapes."

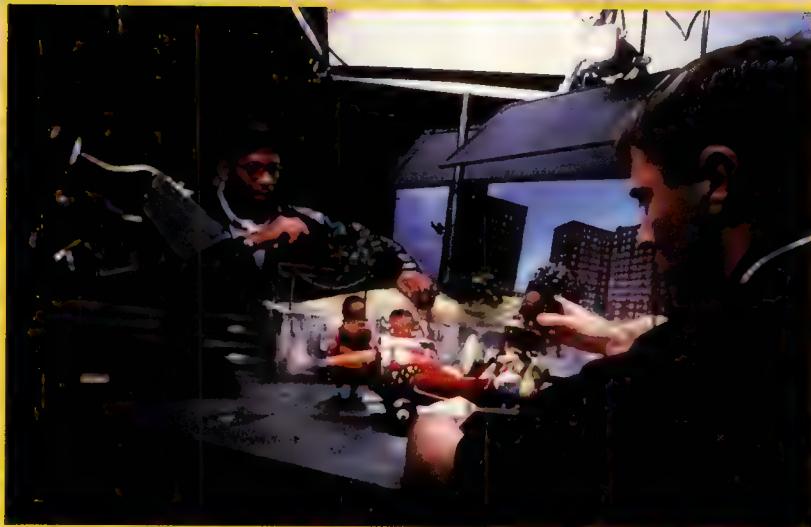
The foam latex method of animation, which is akin to what has been done by big screen animators like Ray Harryhausen, has worked out very well for the production team on the PJs. Puppets are lasting a record two to three months even with the amount of daily use they are subjected to. Maintenance and touch-up are performed regularly to keep the puppets in shape and keep them working as long as possible. The armatures used for the puppets are all steel construction, ball and socket style and are constructed by a special team at Vinton Studios. Hundreds of

Behind the Curtain

with Jim Bertges



Above Left: Living Room Set with cast of The PJs. **Mark Gustafson/Supervising Director.**
Left: Rooftop Set. **Blake Martin - Animator,** animating Thurgood.



Above: Thurgood, Juicy and Calvin with go-cart.
Gary Gatewood/Camera Operator (background).
Kevin MacClean/Animator (foreground). Right:
Boiler Room Set. David Bleiman/Producer &
Director with Thurgood.

armatures are needed to accommodate the large puppet cast and multiples of each character. Armatures are constructed to exacting standards of precision because they simply cannot be allowed to break during a shot. If an armature breaks during a shot it would result in the scrapping of days of shooting and cost thousands of dollars in re-shooting.

Paints used for the puppets are specially formulated, water-based colors which are produced in only one place in the country. As luck would have it, that place is down the street from Will Vinton Studios. The paints must be water-based because any solvents would attack and destroy the foam latex. Part of their special formulation is latex, which not only helps the paint adhere to the foam, but provides flexibility in the color in places where the puppets need to move and bend. That's only the beginning of the specialized items needed to bring the PJs to life.

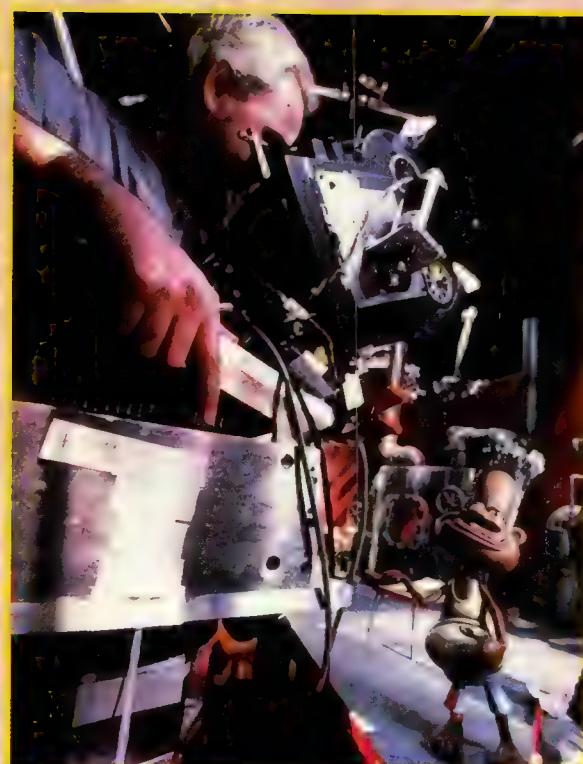
Watching the PJs, the viewer becomes aware of the show's visual style. Not only are the characters designed in a specific style, but that design sense is carried through in the look of the rest of the show. The costumes, the props and even the sets are designed to fit within that world. All that wouldn't be so remarkable if this was just another cartoon show, but in three-dimensional animation all those things must be made. From the buildings to the telephones, right down to Thurgood's plunger, everything is designed and built to fit into the overall design of the show. Nelson Lowry provides an idea of how it all works. "We basically have an army of craftspeople working in shops around town building this stuff. Once we nailed the look, we had a bible of imagery they could work from, so if someone needed to build a phone, they could look at a phone booth and a lamp and sort of infer the look and pick up the style. One thing that's very challenging for us is that we shoot on multiple stages. If you see a long scene with Thurgood talking in the living room that's cut between many shots, that could be up to five sets in a row with five puppets and five anima-

tors working on the same scene, but different angles. So, if we had to build a phone, we'll need to build five of those phones and in many cases we build twenty or thirty."

The PJs' design aesthetic is carried over to the sets as well. Nelson credits Lead Painter, Kathleen Nichols, during pre-production and the first season with bringing a look of real beauty to many of the sets. Techniques familiar to model builders such as dry brushing and washes are used to bring realism to the sets. Also the use of computer printouts of textures and patterns on fabric and paper that are affixed to walls, furniture and props help keep everything within the PJs' design parameters. Vacuum forming is also used to add texture and depth to the sets. One interesting aspect of the sets is that every wall is hinged for easy access by animators or to facilitate different camera angles in a scene. And, of course, even the sets are made in multiple copies.

Occasionally, when a shot calls for an extreme closeup of hands manipulating a prop, the hands and prop will be made in double size. Because the main puppets are only eight to ten inches tall, the double size hands and props make the animation easier and keep from revealing the size and condition of the puppet's actual hands. On the other hand, the heads are solid and nicely detailed, so there isn't much need to double their size for closeups. The only manipulation of the heads is the removal and replacement of eyes and mouths, so they do not face the wear of the rest of the bodies. When the amount of manipulation the bodies receive is considered, it's surprising they last as long as they do.

For every second of film that is shot on the PJs, each puppet is moved twenty-four times. In the animator's parlance, this is known as shooting "on twos". Motion picture film is projected at 24 frames per second with each frame being the equivalent of a still picture. To provide the illusion of movement, the animators put the pup-



pets through their motions in tiny increments, snap a frame and move again. A short cut, called "on ones", is often used in stop motion where two frames are shot of each position, this results in a slightly jerky or "strobing" motion on the puppets. The PJs' animators avoid the jerky look by moving in smaller increments and shooting only one frame at a time. Nelson Lowry comments: "This is an old-style animation studio and the animators are really committed to making the animation beautiful. We owe a lot to the experience and great quality of animators we have. The Studio has been training animators for years. Even some of the computer animators have moved over to the three dimensional stuff and the knowledge they have of how much to move the character translates pretty well into 3D. These animators are good and it shows in the performance of the characters."

Another interesting aspect of the PJs is the movement of the camera. At least once every show there is a moment where the camera weaves its way through or around the moving characters. This kind of shot involves animating both the camera and the characters at the same time. Nelson explains, "There are motion control shots and we allow for a couple in each show. The directors are expected to use them wisely, because they're very expensive. As the name implies, every time the animator moves the puppet and takes a frame, that goes directly into the computer and that advances the camera on a little track a frame of movement. It's pre-programmed. We do a run-through first, moving the puppets through the scene to see that they will make their marks and end on their cue. Then we let it go. We really wanted to do that on the show because it adds an extra dimension to the show."

Filming an animated show is very time intensive and calculating the amount of time it takes to produce a half-hour program produces some mind-numbing numbers. The Studio has a

PJs...Continued from Previous Page

certain standard of animation and the animators can produce as much as twenty-one seconds of animation in a week. So, multiplying that by thirty-five animators, a total of fifteen minutes can be produced. However, that does not account for the time it takes to set up the cameras, lighting, sets, maintenance to the puppets and a number of other contingencies. To complete one show can take up to two and a half months with editing, post production and computer enhancements.

Watching the PJs, the viewer is not really aware of the computer graphics involved because the style of the computer animation blends so well with the style of the show. Giving credit where it's due, Nelson talked about the CG on the show: "Steve Bailey is the head of the CGI department and he does a tremendous amount of computer work and it's a compliment to his work that you think, 'Well I haven't seen much CG in there.' He's managed to match his style to the look of the show in a way we never expected." Obviously in the opening, when you're flying over the projects, it's all CG. A lot of skies and backgrounds are CG. A lot of the effects shots, for instance where Haiti Lady breathes fire or tornadoes. There's a lot, candle flames all sorts of fireballs. And a lot of exteriors, the HUD exterior with the bus going by are all CG. It really helps us because it expands the scope of the show."

The computer is also involved in post production for cleaning up certain shots. Any time an object is thrown through the air or a character leaves the ground there is an elaborate rig involved. The rig is a device that will suspend a puppet or a prop and is also able to be animated, moving that object or character through the scene. After that scene is shot, a "clean pass" is

made of the set with no characters on it. Later, the computer is employed to combine elements of both shots and remove the rig's suspending wires and make the flying part look realistic.

Also unnoticed and not considered by viewers is the amount of maintenance the characters on a show like the PJs require. With constant manipulation, the puppets and sets can show wear and tear after a short amount of time. "It is like a little army going in there, working and shooting all day long. When you see a puppet on screen, it will have a lifetime and then all the foam is stripped off, the head is taken off and it's recast in a mold. New foam is cast on it, it's trimmed and seamed and repainted. And that happens all year long during production. You might think, once they make the puppets, they're done, but there's a staff of about eight people that just work on fixing the puppets."

A final question about the political correctness of using the term "puppet" for these elaborately sculpted and painted figures and the suggestion of a new term such as "Stop-Motion Americans" brought a laugh from Nelson and a comment, "You know, there actually are people who are opposed to calling them puppets, but I think they're puppets. They look like puppets, they smell like puppets and they move like puppets."

Just as with any film or TV program, there's a lot that goes on behind the scenes at the PJs. A groundbreaking animated show like this is far more involved than nearly any live action program being produced. No matter how elaborate a live action show is, it can never be as complex as a show where absolutely everything must be physically made from the smallest prop to the characters themselves. It takes a lot of work and a lot of talent. "We work very hard on this show.



Checking the various replacement mouths for Thurgood. Katherine Dunn/Will Vinton Studios.

Series work is typically very hard, but I think if you could just stand in the middle of the room and watch on a typical filming day the kind of activity that goes on, you'd be surprised. It's a very large, energetic group of people getting a tremendous amount of work done under strict deadlines. It's intense." 



Dahn Nguyen (foreground) - Character Wrangler and Nelson Lowry (background) - Character Wrangler painting Thurgood.

• Nelson Lowry and his Special Projects •

You'd think that after spending all day working with puppets and models and miniatures, the last thing someone like Nelson Lowry, character manager for The PJs, would want to do at home is work with models. You'd be wrong. "I'm sure, like many of your readers, I'm terribly obsessive when it comes to building things. I do it for a living and I go home at night, I have a studio at home and I sit up for hours past midnight building my own stuff. I'm not doing it for any other reason than I love doing it and I love creating a cast of characters for myself."

Impressed by the level of skill exhibited by many garage kit producers, Nelson was encouraged to try his hand at creating models of his own, but with a slight twist. Because many garage kits cover similar subjects and

have a similar look, Nelson has decided to take homemade monsters and robots into another direction. "I'm trying to nudge it into a different direction. I thought one way to do that would be to literally change the way they are made. What I do with my own work is a lot of sketches and doodles, then without much more planning, I go right into scratch building. I basically don't do any sculpting. I build mostly out of cardboard, actually chipboard like you'd find on the back of a sketch pad. It comes in different weights and it has a grain to it like wood, it can bend in one way very easily and is very stiff in another. I kind of pattern draft it, making curvilinear shapes with flat pieces, like clothing. I use a lot of Elmer's glue and modeling paste and occasionally I use some found parts. I avoid model parts to avoid that 'rolled in model parts spaceship' look. I look through old junk and try to find any little strange parts that don't remind me of anything else."

After assembly the whole structure is sprayed with a Featherlite Bondo or Duratek to give it a strong outer surface. This is followed by Gesso, staining and painting. However, the interesting thing is that these creations are unplanned and their shape can change even during construction. "I free build these things without any real plan so they can really change direction halfway through the build. What I thought it was going to look like ends up very different sometimes. They're very light weight, only a few ounces when they're done. They range in size from about six inches to over a foot tall. I also use matches, toothpicks, stir sticks...it all sounds very primitive, but I use anything. Something else I like to do is make a texture wrap. I'll sculpt a texture and make a thin latex sheet over that and wrap that around a surface. That gives it a textured surface."

Nelson would like to eventually cast his creations as kits or, ultimately, make his own stop-motion film with them. However, that would call for some extensive reworking. "If I was to use them for stop-motion, I'd have to retro fit them with armatures, which I dread. They'd have to be opened and fitted and they are pretty delicate."

"I love the new kits, there's just such a naive, primitive love for these things. People render them so lovingly. You just know that there are hundreds and hundreds of hours spent painting and building them. It's a lot of fun."  • **The PJs has been picked up by the WB Network from Fox •**

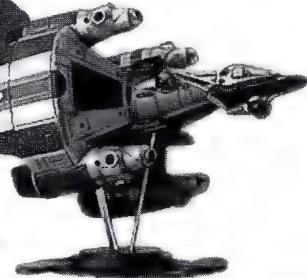
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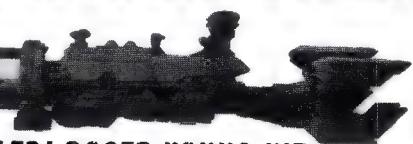
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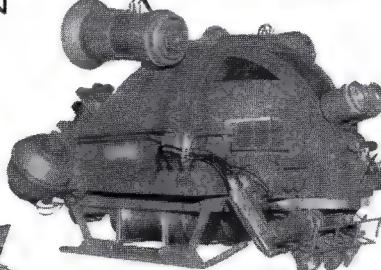
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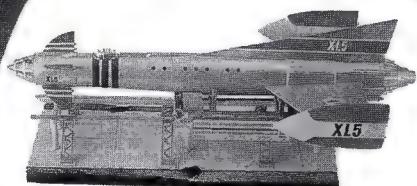
U.S. VERSION
GUNSTAR KIT
1/48TH
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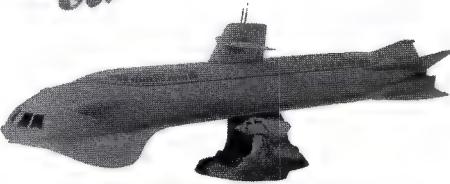
SPINNER
FUTURE POLICE
SPINNER CAR KIT



INNERSPACE POD KIT
THE "KRAKEN"



U.S. VERSION
16" FIREBALL XL5 KIT

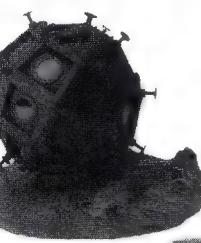


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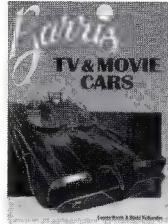
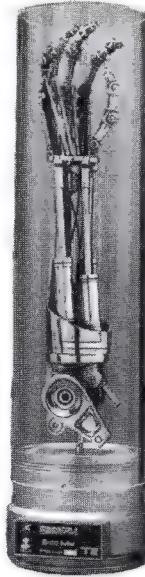


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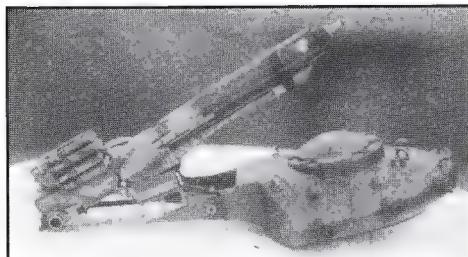
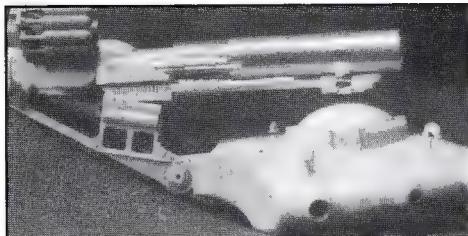
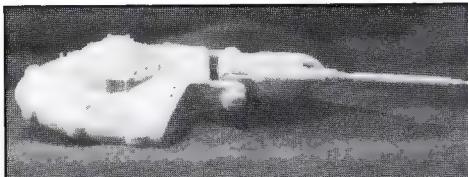
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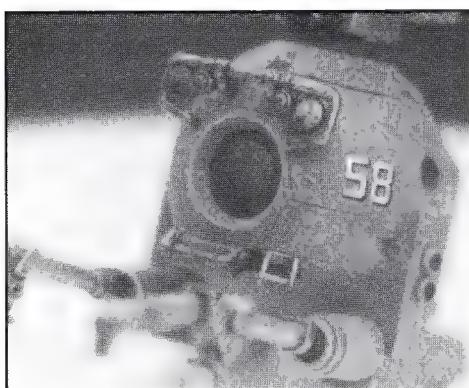


WITH JOE GRAZIANO



Above: The modifications to the turret starting with the original, to the modified to the painted version.

Below: The Gundam Ball Kit



The profile view of the finished Federation Tank kit



Back again! I wanted to review a Star Wars kit for last issue, but I didn't want to build it stock, so I decided to use it in a diorama with some really cool kits you may or may not have heard of before. The kits I'm referring to were released in the early 80's by Nitto. This was their SF3D kit line. Nitto is a Japanese model company, that as far as I know, currently has only one line of kits on the market. Those kits would be the SF3D kits, which due to some legal hassles, has now changed names to Machinen Kreiger 3000 or MAK 3000 for short. The SF3D kits were based on the original sketches and scratchbuilt designs of Kow Yokoyama. They're a sort of retro-futuristic military kit line. I bought a couple of these kits when they first came out, and promptly ruined them, because they required more skill and patience than I possessed at age 17. Then they disappeared from the market, not that they were easy to find back then anyway.

What we have in this issue is a diorama based around two MAK 3000 kits; AMT/Ertl's Trade Federation Tank, and a Gundam Ball kit. Let's start with the building of the kits.

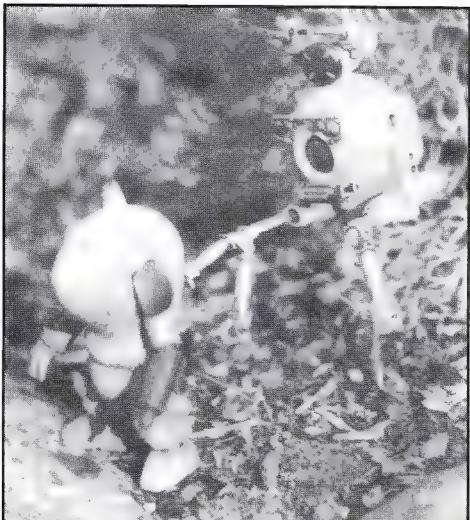
The Gundam Ball is a very simple kit, and was designed to snap together. I opted to glue it together, so I could eliminate the seams. This is a really cool little kit that is supposed to represent the escape pod/cockpit for the pilot in the giant robots in the Gundam anime. It's not a real common kit (at least around here it isn't), so I figured it would work for my diorama as a robot companion to my MAK3000 troopers. What I wanted here was a 3-man patrol, but three of the same kit would be tedious, so I threw in the Ball kit to break it up a little. This kit has scratchbuild potential, so keep your eyes peeled for them. I paid \$12 for mine here in Seattle, but they can be had from Hobby Link Japan (www.hlj.com) for about \$7 each, plus shipping. Yeah, yeah, I know, but I didn't feel like waiting for it.

Basically, I built this kit according to the instructions and painted it a sand color with slight weathering, and the guns, manipulator arms and the light bar were painted black with Citadel Boltgun Metal for a drybrush. The "window" in the center was painted black, then silver, then Tamiya Transparent Red was put over that. It gave me the effect I was looking for, a big electronic eye. If I had thought of this sooner, I would have probably used a tech pen to

draw in a spiral pattern and black out the center of the eye to represent a camera-like shutter before I put the clear red in place. I added a few decals from another Gundam kit to give the Ball a military look, and set it to the side.

Next up are the MAK 3000 kits. I picked up two SAFS MK2 kits (Super Armored Fighting Suit Mark Two). They run about \$18 apiece, and are worth every penny. What you get for your money is this: 1. A really cool box. The boxes all have a picture on the front of the original scratchbuilt model and a great picture on the back of the box of the kit inside. The picture on the back appears to be a watercolor painting of the kit, and has all the suit's statistics and little arrows pointing out what everything is on the suit. 2. The instruction sheets. The instruction sheets are very nicely done, and you don't need to read Japanese to understand them. Everything is broken down with good three-dimensional drawings and symbols that are easy to understand. 3. And then there's the kit. What you get are several trees of plastic parts that are cast perfectly. No flash, no sink holes, just perfect parts with detail so clean it will make your head spin. You also get a selection of various wires, springs and a set of poly-caps. Poly-caps are soft plastic bushings used for making the moving joints, such as the arms and legs, fit snugly without glue. Those of you who have built Gundam kits or Macross Mecha kits will be familiar with these. There used to be some accordion rubber joint covers used for the elbows and knees included in the kits. They aren't there anymore. I happened to find out from an SF3D, now a Mak3000 web site, that the molds for these no longer exist, BUT they are being retooled so they will be included in future kit releases. I decided I wanted them bad enough to steal the rubber "boots" off of a couple of push button pens I had bought for work. Check the grocery store, and you'll see the ones I'm talking about. They run about \$4 a pen and the pen still works fine without them.

When you start building these, remember that it's easier to paint sub-assemblies as you go, because of the way the kits fit together. What I usually do is spray the parts on the trees with my base color and then start assembling them. It helps me to avoid missing an area that I can't get to after it's assembled. You will have to sand seams. The plastic is relatively soft, so start with one grade finer than you would normally use on a plastic kit. I also recommend



The completed Ball & SF3D kits

using Tenax-7R and a syringe to glue the parts together; it just works better than anything else I've used in the past.

The tank is one of those great plastic kits, like Anakin's Pod Racer. I recommend picking up a few thousand extras, because if you like to scratch build, they're great. I traded another kit for the two tanks I have, and bought five Pod Racers at a scratch and dent sale. Trust me, there are more bits and pieces in that Pod Racer kit than you can shake a stick at and, if you like to kit bash, you NEED that kit. The Trade Federation Tank is similar. It doesn't have as many parts, but it's a good beginning for a cool kit bash project.

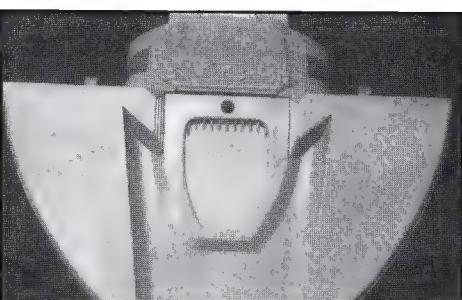
Here's what I did: first I wanted to narrow the profile a little, so I cut off the side-mount weapon pods. That changed the look a lot. I ended up with a round hole on either side of the kit that needed to be filled or covered. I decided to cover them. I bought an old Hasagawa kit of a WW2 German Railway gun - this kit has a ton of cool stuff in it. I used a few bits and pieces to cover the holes in the side of the kit, and found a bunch more that I would use on the turret.

The Turret that comes with the kit is pretty cool, but the gun left a lot to be desired and this isn't AMT's fault. The design is just not very interesting to me, but AMT did a good job reproducing the tank as it was seen in the movie. What I wanted was more. I wanted a bigger gun and a more exciting presentation of the weapon. I wanted it to look mean. I decided the turret needed to be mounted backwards and have the guns come up over the hatch from behind it, sort of like a scorpion tail. So, I spun the turret around and looked at it for a few days while I figured out on paper how I wanted the gun to look. What I finally decided on doing was this: I took the railway gun's mounts from the Hasagawa kit, and some other miscellaneous parts and built a carriage that would mount the gun on the original pivot point that was intended for the kit's weapon. Then I mounted the Trade Federation Tank's (TFT from now on...I'm lazy) turret gun to that minus the barrel. The barrel was replaced with several different sizes of brass and aluminum tubing and a smaller barrel was strapped underneath it with aluminum shim tape. You can get shim tape at a hardware store. This stuff is like Bare Metal Foil, only

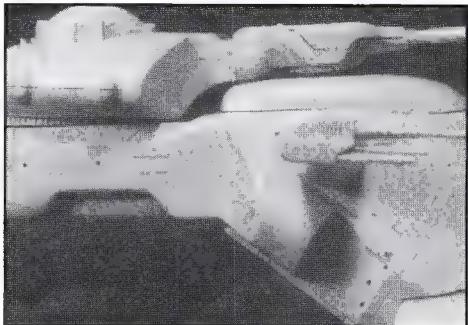
thicker, it's about .005 thick. The shim tape is metal so it will take primer and paint without any problems, and you can use a pen or a toothpick to press a rivet pattern into it.

After the barrel was mounted I took the weapons that were supposed to go on the side mounts that I removed earlier, and glued them onto either side of the new turret gun. Some creative cutting with a Dremel tool was needed to add the rotating bomb rack stolen from an old airplane kit, and the tip from an old tech pen was glued into the end of the big barrel to complete the laser cannon look. There are rounded nubs sticking out around the turret itself, I didn't like these, so I glued some extra booster jet nozzles from a Gundam kit to them to make them look like camera lenses. This went with the arachnid look I was trying for. There is another smaller hatch-like area near the front of the kit that I cut off and replaced with the nose of the Jerry, another SF3D kit that I saved for parts from years ago, not to be confused with Jerry Bucanan's nose, which he refused to part with. The last major change was to the lower hull. That's why you need the second TFT kit. The large flat half-round hull makes the new tank look too top heavy, so I took the other half-round hull from the second kit and added it to the back half of the TFT. This required some cutting and I recommend getting a contour gauge to make sure you cut the right area away from it. I picked mine up at a local hardware store for about \$6. They're handy to have around. That about covers the assembly. I painted the TFT in a sort of woodland camouflage pattern to contrast the tans of the opposing force. I used frisket paper for masking the TFT's camo, and it worked great. It's a fairly large kit, and I didn't need the mask to fit skin tight, so it was fast and easy to mask with frisket. I originally bought this stuff to mask and paint my motorcycle gas tank, but I've found it useful for model building too. It wasn't expensive either, \$8 and change for a 12 inch x 10 foot roll. For model building, that will go a long way. It's low tack too, so it didn't take any of the paint with it when I peeled it off. All in all I really like the Trade Federation Tank kit, and I do plan on building one stock. The only thing that bugged me about it was something on the box. It says on the front of the box that the kit is 1/35th scale. I took it at fact until I started playing around with it deciding what I wanted to scratch build with it. That's when I noticed that the turret's hatch was rather large, and I don't remember the droids looking that small compared to the tank, so I started searching for reference pictures of the tank, and I found one on the Official Star Wars website of a droid sitting in the hatch looking around with a pair of binoculars and he definitely fills the hatch pretty well. If the tank were 1/35th scale as the box says, then that hatch would be about the size of a garage door next to a 1/35th scale droid. My best guess is that a droid action figure would work out quite nicely, if you want to use a droid in a diorama with your tank. Considering the overall size of the tank, I figured it could pass for a 1/20th scale tank in my diorama.

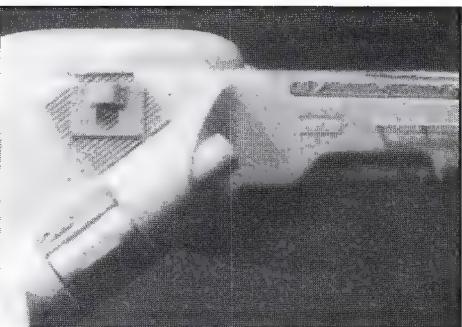
I was originally going to build a permanent display for this little scene, except that when I began trying out different layouts, they were all too big to fit anywhere in the house, so I decided to find somewhere to photograph them out-



Stock and modified underside of the Federation Tank kit.



Final modifications done to the turret on the Federation Tank kit.



side that would look "real" and I would still be able to build smaller display stands for my kits that would fit on the shelves in the house.

I found the perfect place a few blocks from my house. It's a fun way to take pictures of your kits without having to build a huge display for them. Well, that about wraps it up this time. See ya'll next time!

If you have any questions, or comments about this article, you can reach me at Faust99999@aol.com, or my webpage at <http://members.xoom.com/AlienDesigns/main.htm>. This site is still under construction, so be patient. Also, AOL users (like me) might try opening it with Netscape, since AOL's browser doesn't always open it. See ya!



"Letters" - continued from page 5

"Compliments on the Magazine"

Hi Fred,

I just wanted to contact you to see when Jim Bertges may be doing a review on my Teradrox kit that I sent to you a few months back. I've got a new kit to send out for review as well, and more in the works. I've been so busy with my other business that pays the bills that I haven't been able to make it to any shows this year. I'm getting a little more free time now so I'm planning on releasing two or three more kits by the end of the year.

Fred, I also wanted to compliment you and your magazine for gearing toward a more family oriented layout. Like most men, I have nothing against the nude female form but I believe by having a Kids' Korner and a "no nudity" stance, you're doing a great thing for our hobby. In my cellular phone business I have magazines for waiting customers and yours is the only one I can put on public display for customers to browse through. People are constantly asking about your magazine, and being in a small town, most people don't know that resin kits exist. They are blown away to see all the cool stuff and you have probably gained a couple new subscribers through my store alone.

I have had a couple of embarrassing episodes where I left one of the other kit magazines out on my kitchen table and have had a relative or neighbor come by to visit and pick it up and be disgusted at what they saw. Needless to say I have learned to leave only yours out, and the others on my shelf. Like I said before, I haven't got a problem with nudity but I think people who want those style kits will have no trouble finding them.

I also wanted to compliment you on the Jesus buildup in your last issue. When I first saw it I thought, "Oh no, another rip toward Christians." I thought it would be making fun of Christ or somehow degrading the crucifixion. But I was pleasantly surprised to see that it was just the opposite, and was written in a tasteful manner, about the greatest story ever told. I wouldn't be surprised if you get some people upset for putting anything of a religious manner in your mag but you get a huge thumbs up from me!

Anyway, just wanted to say hello and give you my input. Could you e-mail me when you find out when Jim may do the Teradrox? I would sure appreciate it.

Thanks, Dave Britton -
Headhunters Studio (e-mail)

- Good to hear from you, Dave. As you'll no doubt notice, Jim's how-to article utilizing your latest creation is in this issue, along with four other kits in his column.

I'm glad that you feel comfortable enough about our magazine to leave it out for your customers. I agree with you also, when you say that those wanting nude kits will have no problem finding them. That's one of the things that's so great about this hobby; it's got something for everyone.

Glad you enjoyed the article by Mr. Avants. He did a great job on that conversion into the Crucifixion. My wife and I were really thrilled when we saw the real deal at VLS' MasterCon,

two years ago. It truly is a work of art.

Thanks again for writing and we'll look forward to hearing more about your future kit releases.

"Nudity is a Non-Issue With Me"

Mr DeRuvo,

To tell you the truth, I hadn't noticed the lack of nudity in your magazine until Terry Campbell discussed it in his letter to you. I buy, and enjoy, every modeling magazine I can get my hands on and I am looking forward to the new *Model Maniacs* magazine. Whether or not it will feature nudity is a non-issue with me. I read these magazines for the insights and solutions they give me in building and painting figure kits. I do not have a problem with nudity; what I object to is pornography, or at least those model kits that appeal to that particular market. I have certain rules or guidelines in my home because it is MY home. I see no reason why you should be criticized for having rules or guidelines in your magazine. After all, it's YOUR magazine.

Those who are looking for T & A do not have to enter. I have two sons, ages 16 and 17, and I have never censored any of the modeling magazines from their eyes whether or not those magazines featured nudity. They have even accompanied me to Chiller Theatre in the past where some of the material offered is even more pornographic and objectionable than nudity: the Jeffrey Dahmer cookbook and apron, for example. If my sons want to view nudity or pornography, it is now readily available on the internet. And, believe me, they probably know most of the sights. But they are still respectful of others because that is what they learned at home. I seem to be getting off the subject here so let me just say again that nudity, or the lack thereof, should not be an issue if you enjoy the magazine as much as I do yours.

Sincerely, Paul Douglas (e-mail)

- Thanks very much for taking the time to write and express how you feel about the magazine

and its contents.

I agree with you that nudity in this publication, or the absence of it, should not be an issue because the hobby is not made up solely of that type of model. For those who MUST have their share of it in order to fully appreciate modeling, I'm confident that they'll find what they need elsewhere.

Readers, Please Note:

At the time of publication of this issue, we have received a slightly greater than seven (acceptance) to one (against) ratio of comments on the "nudity" issue. We have even encouraged your comments on this subject and have responded to your opinions by addressing them fairly and honestly both individually and in print. At this point, however, we are now going to leave that subject where it's at.

Those who want to enjoy the contents of *Modeler's Resource®* without the nudity will continue to do so. Those who cannot see themselves supporting this magazine because of our "no nudity" policy should avail themselves of other publications that meet their preferences. We now want to resume spending our time and energies just getting to the basics of modeling in the venue we now adhere to, and share our love for the hobby with the younger group while continuing to serve the older generation of modelers. We'll continue to print the articles and photos that satisfy those who support MR and our decision to print only what we want this magazine to represent.

We hope that we have also put the issue to rest as to "the ownership of Modeler's Resource" (owned only by my wife and I) and the role Kalmbach distribution has in relation to our magazine (only as a distributor; same as ADS)!

With all that said, no more letters or comments on either of these subjects will be printed after this issue. Now, let's get back to the fun of modeling and enjoying our hobby!!

Fred DeRuvo - Founder & Exec Publisher

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From Movies to Models: What We May See in Kit Form...



With Jim "Mr. Hollywood" Bertges

Well, it really looks like Hollywood loves comic books there are tons of new comic-related projects on the drawing boards and going before the cameras. Spiderman is a go and both Blade 2 and Spawn 2 are in the works. With all the new titles reported here there are also rumors of a Fantastic Four movie, the revival of the Nick Cage Superman film, a new installment in the Batman franchise (as soon as they can make up their minds what to do) and a bunch of other four-color heroes waiting to get on the big screen. Let's take a look at what our friends in Hollywood are cooking up for us this time around.

You may already know this, but it bears repeating. Christopher Lee has joined the cast of Star Wars: Episode II! Mr. Lee is following in the footsteps of his good friend and collaborator, Peter Cushing, who played the Grand Moff Tarkin in Episode IV: A New Hope (Star Wars). There is no word yet, on what his role will be, but he will be working in Australia on a break in the filming of Lord of the Rings which is shooting in New Zealand, the next island over. Mr. Lee is quoted as saying, "One of the things that George Lucas said to me was, 'We'll have a lot of fun.' And that, believe me, is very good to hear." Also joining the cast of Episode II is the talented and versatile Jimmy Smits. The Emmy-award nominated actor will be portraying Bail Organa of Alderaan.

Producer Joel Silver has a couple of new genre projects in the works. First up, he's talking to commercial director Steve Beck to handle the remake of the William Castle thriller **13 Ghosts**. This will be the second Castle remake for the team of Silver and Robert Zemeckis and their Dark Castle Entertainment. The first was The House on Haunted Hill and they promise that **13 Ghosts** will be "scary as hell." Also on the slate for Dark Castle is a remake of William Castle's **Macabre**. The original involved a kidnapped Doctor's daughter who is buried alive and he is given five hours to find and rescue her. Zemeckis is set to direct **Macabre**. In addition, Silver is in talks with Skip Woods to write and direct a remake of **Logan's Run**. There's no word on what will be done to update the new version.

Silver has also acquired the rights to the Image comics series, **Adrenalin**. Christina Ricci will play an orphaned Russian girl

transformed into a Cyborg and programmed to destroy the US. The film is being described as a cross between *La Femme Nikita* and *Blade Runner*.

Artisan Entertainment has entered into a deal with **Marvel Comics** to develop at least fifteen Marvel characters for TV series, direct to video features and Internet projects. The highest profile characters Artisan has their sights on are Captain America and Thor. Cap is headed for feature films while Thor is being groomed for a TV series. Other characters in the deal are mostly lower level or secondary characters including; the Black Panther, Deadpool, Iron fist, Morbius, Long Shot, the Power Pack, Mort the Dead Teenager and Antman. Some of the other characters mentioned for Direct to Video were The Punisher, Black Widow and Man Thing. Dazzler, formerly Disco Dazzler, is also under consideration for a TV series.

Speaking of Marvel Comics, there are some interesting rumors swirling around the once abandoned **Incredible Hulk** at Universal. Now, keep in mind that these are only rumors, but word is that the Hulk is still being developed by Gale Anne Hurd, the Producer of several James Cameron films. The real rumor involves the casting of Lou Ferrigno in the film; he won't be playing old green skin this time though, he's up for the part of Crusher Creel, The Absorbing Man. Who else, you might ask, do the rumors have cast in the film? Well, fresh off *Bedazzled*, Brendan Fraser and Elizabeth Hurley are supposedly being considered for the leads of Bruce Banner and Betty Ross. Remember, this is just a rumor.

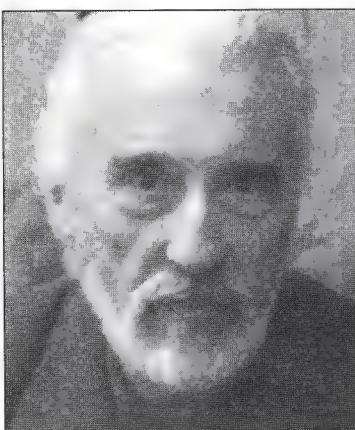
Producer Mark Canton is teaming up with Stan Lee Media to bring Lee's animated Internet series **The 7th Portal** to the big screen in a big-budgeted way. **7th Portal** involves a group of interracial, international group of young superheroes who use the Internet in their adventures. Canton is known for his involvement with the comic book based movies, *Batman*, *Men In Black* and the Science Fiction actioner *Starship Troopers*.

Although they haven't announced any titles yet, George Lucas' special effects house, **Industrial Light & Magic** has announced that they will start producing computer animated films. The company is already known for adding CG effects to films such as *Jurassic Park*, *Spawn*, *The Phantom Menace* and many others. Now they will take the plunge into creating full feature films via the computer. Their recent involvement with the canceled CG *Frankenstein* project was the first step toward becoming a full-fledged producer of features.

Tim Roth is one of the first actors to sign on for the upcoming feature production of **Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone**. Roth



Captain America © Marvel Comics



Thor © Marvel Comics



Tim Roth is one of the first actors to sign on for the upcoming feature production of **Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone**. Roth

will play Professor Snape, the mysterious potions teacher at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry where Harry studies. It is likely that Roth will appear in subsequent installments of the Harry Potter series since his character appears in the first three novels.

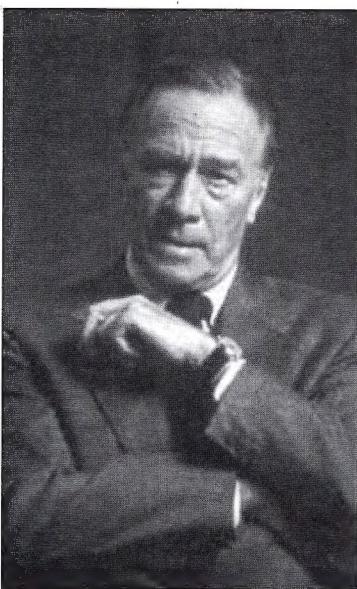
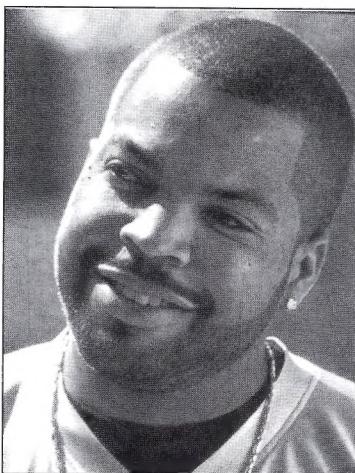
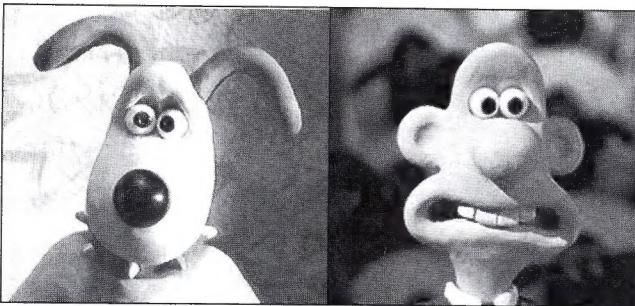
With the success of *Chicken Run* under their belt, *Ardman Animation* is hard at work on their next animated feature, **The Tortoise and the Hare** which will hit screens sometime in 2002. However, the interesting news is that in their deal to make four pictures in the next several years for Dreamworks, a feature version of their **Wallace and Gromit** is planned. The bad news is that if it is produced, we won't see *Wallace & Gromit* until 2004.

Sam Neill has signed up to repeat his role as Dr. Alan Grant in **Jurassic Park 3**. The second dinosaur sequel was set to begin filming in August 2000 for a July 2001 release. Joe Johnston of *Jumanji* and *October Sky* has signed to direct and Steven Spielberg will serve as executive producer through his Amblin Entertainment.

Heather Graham, Felicity Shagwell of *Austin Powers The Spy Who Shagged Me*, has signed to star opposite Johnny Depp in **From Hell**. The cinematic adaptation of Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's graphic novels deals with a Scotland Yard Detective (Depp) who is investigating the Jack The Ripper slayings in 1880 London. Graham portrays an Irish prostitute who is on the Ripper's list.

He may not be Austin Powers, but he's just as charming...**Matthew Blackheart: Monster Smasher** will be debuting on your television set in 2001. The Sci Fi Channel just acquired 22 episodes of the comedy/action hour series which is being distributed by New Line Television and is executive produced by Richard Donner. Oozing with action and excitement, the show stars Robert Bogue as Matthew Blackheart, a WWII hero who is revived after being cryogenically frozen for five decades. His mission is to wipe out evil and save the world from deadly monsters created by mad scientist, Dr. Mortas.

The works of the late Science Fiction writer, **Isaac Asimov**, are becoming more popular in Hollywood these days even after the performance of the Robin Williams' starrer, *The Bicentennial Man*. Warner Bros has bought the Asimov story *The Ugly Little Boy* as a vehicle for Demi Moore. Fox has the option to his classic Foundation trilogy as well as *I Robot*. Paramount is working on *The End of Eternity* as a project for Ridley Scott to direct. And Sony Pictures Family Entertainment is planning to make a series of animated films based on Asimov's children's



novels *Norby the Mixed Up Robot*. The next *Dracula* is getting ready to go before the cameras soon. **Wes Craven Presents: Dracula 2000** will be an updating of the story featuring Christopher Plummer as Abraham Van Helsing, a London antiques dealer who travels to America to rescue his daughter, Mary, from his arch enemy, the bloodthirsty Count Dracula. There is no word yet as to who will portray the Count. However, if the movie isn't timed right, they will have to retitle it *Dracula 2001*.

The producer of *The Sixth Sense*, Barry Mendel, and the director of *Con Air*, Simon West, are teaming to bring the classic 60s British TV series **The Prisoner** to the big screen. The series, which focused on a man who may have been a spy and his imprisonment in the mysterious "Village", starred Patrick McGoohan. McGoohan will be executive producer of the new film. McGoohan who was prominent in the creation and production of the series also wrote a screenplay based on the series in 1996, but the producers have opted to rely more on the original series and create a new script.

Ice Cube has signed to star in the next entry in the Mars race. **John Carpenter's Ghosts Of Mars** is the story of human colonists on Mars one hundred seventy-four years in the future who must be rescued after they have been possessed by Martian ghosts. Production started in June of 2000.

The Academy Award nominated writer/director of *The Green Mile* and the *Shawshank Redemption*, Frank Darabont is in talks with New Line Cinema to write, direct and produce the upcoming remake of **Forbidden Planet**. Although Darabont is well known for his "high class" projects, he's been a life-long fan of science fiction and horror. Some of his early screenplays include the remake of *The Blob* and *The Fly II*. Unfortunately, the latest word is that Mr. Durabont is no longer associated with this project. It will proceed at New Line with another director and writer, but it will not be the same.

Last time I mentioned the fully Computer Animated version of **Frankenstein** being produced by Universal and ILM. Just at press time we received word that the project had been canceled. Although we regret that we will miss what promised to be a very interesting film, you never know what will happen in Hollywood, especially with undying monsters.

That's it for this installment, but rest assured, even while you sleep, the wheels of Hollywood are turning and churning, grinding out stuff simply for your pleasure. Until next time, go to the movies, Hollywood needs your money!

MR

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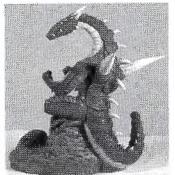
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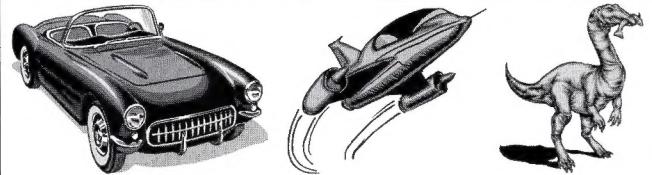
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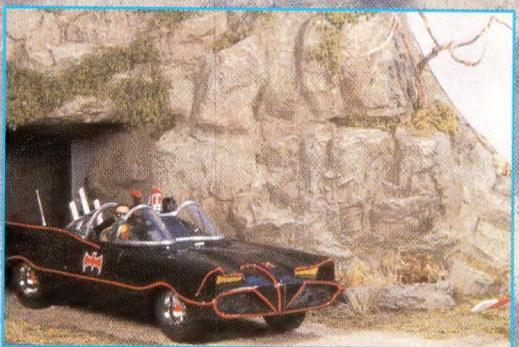
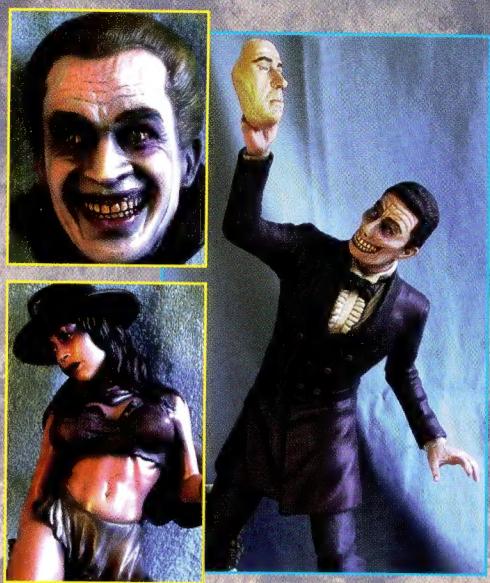
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